



# **ADMISSIONS POLICY**

## **Finstock Church of England Primary School**

### **2021/22**

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## **Introduction**

Finstock CE Primary School is an academy and part of The MILL Academy. The MILL Academy (the Trust) is the Admissions Authority for Finstock CE Primary School. Following public consultation, this policy has been approved by The MILL Academy Trustees on 4 December 2019.

These arrangements come into force for admissions planned for the 2021-22 academic year.

This policy is for entry to Reception to Year 6. The policy for entry to Nursery is available separately and applications are made directly to the school.

## **Coordination of Admissions for the Normal Admissions Round (Entry to Reception in September 2021)**

Finstock CE Primary School is part of the coordinated admission process for Oxfordshire for entry to Reception in 2021-22. The full scheme is published on the Oxfordshire County Council's public website.

Children can start school for the first time in the Reception year group in the academic year after their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday and must start school in the term after their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. Applications must be made by 15<sup>th</sup> January of the academic year in which their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday falls. Applications made after this date will be considered to have been made late. See the Oxfordshire County Council public website for details of how late applications of changes of preferences are to be dealt with.

Applications can be made online by using the link on Oxfordshire County Council's website [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/primaryadmissions](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/primaryadmissions)

## **Admission Number**

A Published Admission Number (PAN) is set for each Year group that takes into account our capacity to offer and deliver an effective education for all students at Finstock CE Primary School. Our PAN for each Year group for September 2021 will be 15.

For admissions after September 2021 i.e. in-year admissions, as Finstock CE Primary School operate with multiple year-group classes, the Trust reserves the right to refuse in-year admission applications which would require an additional form to be established during the year and therefore requires the employment of additional teachers.

## **Admission Criteria**

All children with an Education, Health and Care Plan naming the school (or children who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs naming the school in Part 4 of the Statement) will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If Finstock CE Primary School is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

If Finstock CE Primary School receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in priority order until all places are filled. In all cases where parents express a preference for the school on their application, these applications will take priority over those who do not express a preference.

1. Highest Priority will be given to looked after children and children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order. A looked after child is a child who is in the care of a local authority in England, or is being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions.

2. Priority will next be given to children who appear to Finstock CE Primary School to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.

3. Priority will next be given to disabled children or children with an exceptional medical or social need and who need to be admitted to a school on the grounds of physical accessibility. The definition of disability is that contained within the Equality Act 2010. The Trust will require evidence supporting applications on the basis of disability, medical or social needs, from the appropriate professional person involved with the child/family.

4. Priority will next be given to children of staff employed at Finstock CE Primary School, in either of the following circumstances:

- (a) The member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application of admission to the school is made; or
- (b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

5. Priority will next be given to children who live in Finstock CE Primary School's designated (catchment) area. If there are more applicants than places in this category, priority will be given in the following order:

(a) First priority in category 5 will go to those children who have a brother or sister already on roll at Finstock CE Primary School at the time of application and who will still be attending at the time of entry. However, if there are more applicants than places in category 6(a), priority will be given, within this group, to those children who live closest to Finstock CE Primary School using the nearest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System.

(b) Second priority in category 5 will go to those children who live closest to Finstock CE Primary School by the shortest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System.

6. Children who live outside Finstock CE Primary School's designated (catchment) area. If there are more applicants than places in this category, priority will be given in the following order:

(a) First priority in category 6 will go to those children who will have a brother or sister on roll at Finstock CE Primary School at the time of application, who will still be attending at the time of entry. If there are more applicants than places in category 6(a), priority will be given, within this group, to children who live closest to Finstock CE Primary School by the shortest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System.

(b) Second priority in category 6 will go to those children who live closest to Finstock CE Primary School by the shortest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System.

### **Twins and Children from Multiple Births**

Where the parent has made the same preferences of school and through the normal operation of the admission arrangements the last available place at Finstock CE Primary School has been allocated to one twin, or child from a multiple birth, the other twin, or the other children from the multiple birth, will be offered a place at that school. This means that in these circumstances the Published Admission Number would be exceeded.

## **Admission of a Child outside Their Normal Age Group**

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside their normal age group. When such a request is made, the Trust will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the views of the Headteacher and any supporting evidence provided by the parent.

This will include:

- taking account of the parent's views; and
- any information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; and
- where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; and
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and
- whether they may naturally have fallen into the lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely; and
- the views of the headteacher of the school(s) concerned.

When informing a parent of the decision on the year group to which their child should be admitted, the Trust will give clear reasons for the decision. Where it has been agreed that a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which students are normally admitted to the school) the application will be:

- processed as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible; and
- considered against the determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable.

The Trust will not give a lower priority on the basis that the child is not of the correct age.

Parents' statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied will not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

## **Random Allocation**

If the distance 'tie break' produces an identical result for two or more applicants, Finstock CE Primary School will use the use random allocation to determine who will be offered a place. This will be carried out for Finstock CE Primary School by the Local Authority (an impartial third party).

## **Applications Other Than the Normal Intake to Reception (In-Year Admissions)**

In-year admissions are for those children looking for a school place during the academic year. Parents/carers are able to submit an in-year transfer application form no more than one term before the place at the school is required.

Finstock CE Primary School is part of the coordinated in-year admissions process for Oxfordshire. The scheme is published on the County Council's public website (<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/transferring-or-moving-school>).

Admission to Finstock CE Primary School during an academic year depends on whether or not there are places available in the required year group(s).

## **Appeals**

If we receive more applications than we have places, it may not be possible to offer a place. If we cannot offer places to all the children in our catchment area we will use our admission criteria to allocate the places.

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. The Local Authority will act as the Trust's agent in dealing with admission appeals.

Appeals are heard by an independent panel. The Independent Panel hearing the appeal has a statutory duty to act in accordance with the following legal requirements both of which govern all school admission appeals/reviews:

- The School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998, as amended by subsequent legislation and case law;
- The Codes on School Admissions and School Admission Appeals produced by the Department for Education (DfE);

Details of the procedure are available from the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) website and details of the procedure will be sent out with the response letter.

## **Repeat Applications**

Any parent can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the admissions round.

Parents do not have the right to a second appeal in respect of the same school for the same academic year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the Trust has accepted a second application from the appellant because of a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school but still refused admission.

## **Continued Interest List**

Finstock CE Primary School will operate a waiting list for each year group. Lists of children, who cannot be offered a place at a school but where parents want them to continue to be considered, should a place become available, are called 'Continued Interest' (CI) lists. Where in any year the school receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list (CI List) will operate until the end of the academic year of entry.

The waiting list will be maintained by the school, via the Local Authority, and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the admission criteria. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the admission criteria. The waiting list will be reordered in accordance with the admission criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list.

Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

## **In-Year Fair Access Panel (IYFAP)**

Finstock CE Primary School can be asked to admit vulnerable children part way through an academic year. To ensure that the distribution of in-year admissions of vulnerable students is handled fairly, speedily and equitably, Finstock CE Primary School is part of the Oxfordshire In-Year Fair Access Protocol for admissions of previously excluded or hard to place children: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/admissions)

## **Fraudulent Applications**

If a place has been obtained on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application (for example, a false claim to residence in a designated/ catchment area) and this results in the denial of a place to a child with a stronger claim, the school may withdraw the offer of the place. This follows the guidance in paragraphs 2.12 and 2.13 of the School Admissions Code (December 2014) published by the Department for Education:

[2.12] An admission authority must not withdraw an offer of a place unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable amount of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

Where the parent has not responded to the offer, the admission authority must give the parent a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not. Where an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, the application must be considered afresh, and a right of appeal offered if an offer is refused.

[2.13] A school must not withdraw a place once a child has started at the school, except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In deciding whether to withdraw the place, the length of time that the child had been at the school must be taken into account. For example, it might be considered appropriate to withdraw the place if the child has been at the school for less than one term.

The Local Authority will act as the Trust's agent in establishing whether a place has been obtained on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

## **Appendix A: Explanation of Oversubscription Criteria**

### **Siblings**

For admissions purposes, a sibling, brother or sister is defined as one of the following:

- A brother or sister (both parents the same) living at the same home address; or
- A half- brother or half-sister (one parent the same) living at the same home address; or
- A step-brother or step-sister (sharing a parent who is married or in a civil partnership) living at the same home address; or
- An adopted child who, by reason of the adoption, now shares one or more parents with a child living at the same home address.

### **Time of Entry (Siblings)**

For admission purposes, some priority is given to those with a brother or sister attending the relevant school at the applicant's "time of entry". This means, that, in the normal admissions round, there will be no sibling connection for admission purposes for the following:

- Applicants for entry to Reception, where they have a brother or sister only in Year 6.

### **Measuring Distances from Home to School**

Children who live closest to the school using the shortest designated route as defined on Oxfordshire County Council's Directorate for Children, Education and Families' Geographic Information System.

Finstock CE Primary School continues to use the Local Authority's measuring system, whereby the route from home to school has been measured using the "shortest designated route".

The start point of a measurement is the 'seed point' of the home address. The 'seed point' is provided by Ordnance Survey from information compiled from Royal Mail and/or district or city councils. The seed point normally falls within the bounds of a property. The accuracy of seed points is to the nearest ten centimetres. It is possible to move the location of an individual seed point, but this is not necessary for most addresses. 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.

From the seed point the route firstly connects to the nearest point of the digitised network namely the road on which the house is situated. The positioning of front doors, driveways and back gates are not relevant to the route or the measurement and are not programmed to be used by the measuring system.

The digitised network is constructed from road data supplied by Ordnance Survey called the Integrated Transport Network (ITN). The Integrated Transport Network has been accurately digitised to measure along the centre of roads and takes corners at right angles. This is the same underlying information as 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 ITN has been augmented by the LA to take into account other available public routes (e.g. alleyways, public footpaths, bridleways, etc.). Ordnance Survey assures that the augmented ITN 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 'shortest designated route' is the nearest open gate of the school, first arrived at from the direction of travel from the seed point 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 LA and consulted with each individual school to ensure accurate placement of the gate and its availability for use.

The shortest designated route is established using an algorithm within the bespoke software used by the LA. This software is called RouteFinder and is produced by Higher Mapping Solutions ([www.highermappingsolutions.com](http://www.highermappingsolutions.com)). This programme integrates with the LA's database (ONE) which is supplied by Capita Children's Services ([www.capita-cs.co.uk](http://www.capita-cs.co.uk)).

RouteFinder measures in kilometres and the measurement is converted into miles accurate to three decimal places, which gives an accuracy 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 for example, where roads are used, the measurement 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 constitute mal-administration of the admissions process by the Local Authority for the school.

### **Home Address and Multiple Addresses**

The address on the application should be the child's address at the time of application. This is the address at which the child spends the majority of term-time school nights (Sunday night to Thursday night). Where children spend time with parents at more than one address then the address given on the form should be the one that they live at (i.e. sleep at) for the majority of term time school nights (Sunday night to Thursday night). If children spend time equally at different addresses then this should be declared in writing and signed by all parties with parental responsibility. The Trust may ask for proof of the living arrangements (i.e. a court decision) and they may ask for confirmation of an address you have given. If it is accepted by the Trust that a child spends time equally at two different addresses (for example, one week with each parent in turn during term-times), the address used for admissions purposes will be the address most favourable (i.e. closest) to the first preference requested.

The Local Authority will act as the Trust's agent in establishing the home address.

### **Multiple Applications**

If parents cannot agree on the schools to list on the application and submit separate applications, The Trust will only consider the application made by the parent who receives child benefit for that child.

If a parent is unhappy with this decision their recourse would be to seek an order from the Court.

### **Changes of Address**

Changes of address which occur during the time period as set out in the Local Authority's guide for admissions (usually early to mid-November in the year proceeding entry) can be taken into account if proof of this change is provided (see below). To confirm your new address, the Local Authority, acting on behalf of the Trust, will need one of the following:

- A solicitor's letter advising contracts have been exchanged (if the property is being purchased); or

- A copy of a tenancy agreement (if the property is to be rented). If this tenancy agreement comes to an end before September 2019 we may not accept the address for admissions purposes; or
- A copy of your Council Tax Bill showing the same name(s) as in Section 5 of the CAF.

The Local Authority will act as the Trust's agent in establishing the home address.

### **Designated Area**

The designated (catchment) area for Finstock CE Primary School is attached as an appendix.

## Appendix B: Terms Used in this Explanation

'Shortest designated route'	The shortest distance between two points calculated using a computer programme as defined in this explanatory document
Geographic Information System (GIS)	A system designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyse, manage and present all types of geographic data. The Admissions Team of Oxfordshire County Council uses MapInfo (supplied by Pitney Bowes Software) for its GIS needs
Local Authority (LA)	Oxfordshire County Council
Continued Interest List (CIL)	Continued Interest List made up of children who have not been and cannot be offered a place at the school.
Ordnance Survey	The national mapping agency for Great Britain, an executive agency and non-ministerial government department of the UK Government
'Seed point'	A geographically-defined spatial point set by Royal Mail and/or district or city councils, and supplied to Ordnance Survey which then sells that data to other organisations (e.g. Oxfordshire County Council). The seed point used by the Admissions Team of Oxfordshire County Council is the 'all numeric British Co-ordinate System' (easting and northing)
'Easting'	a measurement in metres east of the south-west corner of the SV square of the Ordnance Survey mapping grid (this square is in the far south-west of the British Isles and includes the Scilly Isles). Oxfordshire County Council uses a six-digit integer and a single decimal place (accuracy to 10 centimetres)
'Northing'	A measurement in metres north of the south-west corner of the SV square of the Ordnance Survey mapping grid (this square is in the far south-west of the British Isles and includes the Scilly Isles). Oxfordshire County Council uses a six-digit integer and a single decimal place (accuracy to 10 centimetres)
Digitised network	The geographic database of all possible, available, measurable routes. The digitised network is based on the Integrated Transport Network (ITN) produced by Ordnance Survey augmented to include additional non-driveable public routes
'Nearest open gate'	The first gate arrived at from the direction of travel which is available for use by students for entry and exit to the school site at the start and end of the school day
Algorithm	A series of programmed instructions carried out by the RouteFinder software which calculates all available routes between the start and end points and outputs the shortest

RouteFinder	GIS-based software produced by Higher Mapping Solutions ( <a href="http://www.highermappingsolutions.com">www.highermappingsolutions.com</a> ) which is designed to find the shortest measurement between two defined points using the available network.
ONE database	Database created by Capita Children's Services ( <a href="http://www.capitacs.co.uk">www.capitacs.co.uk</a> ) used by Oxfordshire County Council to hold information about children and their applications for school places
Exceptional medical or social needs	When applying for a place under this criterion, parents must include supporting evidence from an independent professional person who is aware of the situation and supports your preference for the school. The professional should be a doctor, health visitor, social worker, etc. The Trust reserves the right to ask for evidence or seek further advice.