



OMBERSLEY ENDOWED FIRST SCHOOL & PRE-SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY 2025/26

At Ombersley Endowed First School we offer a warm welcome to all. The maximum number of pupils to be admitted in the Reception year or any other year is 30. Parents considering our school for their child are encouraged to telephone the school office to make an appointment to meet the Headteacher and visit the school. Should the visit be before the year of application, forms will be forwarded to the parents of the prospective entrants at the appropriate time.

Admissions procedure

The Admissions Authority to this Voluntary Aided School is the Governing Body. However the Governing Body participates in the Co-ordinated Admission Arrangements of the Local Authority (LA). Parents seeking a place for children at our school should apply online at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions or through the link on www.ombersley.worcs.sch.uk In line with LA policy, the closing date for applications this year will be **15 January 2025**. If you do not have access to the internet, you can get online at any Worcestershire library or telephone Schools Admissions on 01905 678204.

After the closing date, you will need to visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions to download a PA1 Late application form to apply or telephone 01905 822700 to request a Late application form or the form can be printed from the Admissions page on the WCC website. The school will only accept late applications, where they are received by **28th February 2025**, in the same circumstances under which the LA consider an application as on time. Any applications not meeting these circumstances, or received after this date, will be considered after those received on time.

Children whose 5th birthday falls between **1st September 2025 to 31st December 2025** will start school full-time in September 2025. Parents are legally entitled to access education in the September following their child's 4th birthday and parents can request that their child attends part time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Parents have the legal right to keep their child at Playgroup/Nursery School/or at home until the term after their child's fifth birthday. The Governors will keep a place for any child registered with us to enter full-time education in the same academic year. Admission may not be deferred beyond the relevant academic year.

Admissions Criteria

Unless the school is oversubscribed, the school will admit all pupils seeking a place. The Governing Body will not exceed the Pupil Admission Number (PAN) of 30 unless directed to do so by an appeals panel or in order to admit a child where the school is named on an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP) or in order to avoid splitting siblings in the case of multiple births. All preferences are treated equally. The PAN only applies to the relevant age group. This means that admission authorities may not refuse admission to other age groups on the grounds that they have already reached their PAN. They may, however, refuse

admission where the admission of another child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources.

When there are more applications than places children are admitted in the following order of priority:

- i) 'Looked after' and previously 'Looked after' children.

'Looked after' means all those currently in the care of or accommodated by a Local Authority under the terms of the Children Act 1989 and children who were previously in the care of or accommodated by a Local Authority but immediately after being looked after, became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order.

looked after children and all previously looked after children including those who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Or such evidence that demonstrates a child was in state care outside of England prior to being adopted

- ii) Siblings (see below for definition) of pupils attending the school **and** living within the **catchment** area of the school. In order to qualify for a place on the grounds of a sibling attending the school, the sibling must already be attending the school at the time of application or attended the school within the past three academic years. Copies of catchment area maps, if required are available from the LA, or can be viewed in schools.

In the event of a school catchment area change being approved, pupils who would still have a **sibling connection** (see below for definition) at the time of admission and who are living at the same address in the previous catchment area for a school, (but not within the revised catchment area), at the time the change was approved will be considered as living within the **catchment area**.

- iii) Pupils living within the **catchment** area of the school. Copies of catchment area maps, if required are available from the LA, or can be viewed in school.

- iv) Pupils living outside of the catchment area but who would still have a **sibling connection** (see below for definition) at school at the time of admission. In order to qualify for a place on the grounds of a sibling attending the school, the sibling must already be attending the school at the time of application or have attended in the previous three academic years.

- v) Pupils who have a **significant reason** for admission, such reasons, the validity of which will be determined by the Governing Body, will include medical, social or compassionate grounds. To be considered under this category it has to be shown that only this school can meet the medical, social or compassionate needs.

Parents/carers are required to produce a medical certificate or other appropriate information from an independent source. (**Significant reasons will not be considered unless supporting information is attached to your application form when submitted**);

- vi) Children of Staff: Children of any member of staff employed at the mainstream school in either of the following circumstances: a) Where that member of staff has been employed for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made, or b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage;

- vii) pupils who live **nearest** to the school by the shortest straight line distance. Straight Line Distance The measurement will be taken using the GeoCode Points for each property and the GeoCode point for the School. The Local Authority uses a software package called Arcview GIS to determine distance. Ordnance Survey supplies the co-ordinates that are used to plot an address within this system. (In the event of equi-distance applicants, any place will be allocated by random selection (lottery). Legal And Democratic Services, who are totally independent of School Admissions will supervise this process) The measurement will be taken using the GeoCode Points for each property and the GeoCode point for the centre of the school. The Local Authority use a software package called Arcview GIS to

determine distance. Ordnance Survey supply the co-ordinates that are used to plot an address within this system. **(In the event of equi-distance applicants, any place will be allocated by random selection (lottery). Someone totally independent of the Governing Body will supervise this process).**

In accordance with legislation, a child with an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP) will be offered a place at the school named in the EHCP.

Where there are too many applications from within the catchment area, priority will be decided in the order indicated above to all catchment area applicants, i.e. sibling connection, significant reasons, attendance at feeder school then according to distance, each assessed as indicated above.

The sibling connection, as well as brother and sister will include half-siblings (that is children who share one birth parent) and legally adopted children. They must also be living at the same home address. Children who are brought together as a family by a civil partnership and who are living at the same address, are also considered to be siblings

In the event of a multiple birth where not all children from that multiple birth can be allocated a place within the PAN the school will admit all the children provided this does not cause a breach in class size legislation.

Parental Responsibility and what is considered to be the Home Address

Home is defined as the only or main permanent residential address, at the closing date for applications, where the child usually resides and which is the usual address of the parent/carer with main responsibility for the child. Where parents/carers have shared responsibility, the child's home address will usually be considered to be that of the parent/carer with whom the child lives for the majority of the school week (eg three or more days out of five Monday to Friday during termtime). Where care is split equally, parent/carers must provide independent supporting documentary evidence to prove that care is equally split. In such cases the address used will be determined by random selection (lottery). Legal and Democratic Services who are totally independent of School Admissions will supervise this process. Should more than one parent have parental responsibility for a child, both parents should be in agreement over the preferences expressed prior to the application being submitted. Where more than one parent submits an application for a child, or where there is a parent not in agreement with the preferences, the Local Authority and any admission authority applied for, legally has to comply with the preferences expressed. If this is not the same, then parents will have to seek resolution and if necessary legal resolution. It may be necessary for the courts to determine which parent can make the final decision on schooling. Failure to ensure agreement prior to submission, may result in a delay in any application being processed. When submitting your application, as part of the terms and conditions, you will be required to confirm that parents are in agreement with the preferences expressed, this will also apply if you wish to transfer in year. If it is subsequently determined that agreement was not made prior to the application being submitted, it could result in the withdrawal of the offer of a place, if it is determined that the information supplied was intentionally misleading or fraudulent.

Allocation of Places

The LA on behalf of the Governors, will notify parents of the outcome of their application for a place in the reception year group.

Children for whom Ombersley Endowed First School has been identified as most suitable in an Education Health Care Plan will be allocated a place.

Where schools are oversubscribed, admission authorities must rank applications in accordance with their determined arrangements. The qualifying scheme must ensure that for

primary school applications, all offers must be made on the same primary National Offer Day i.e. 16 April or the next working day.

If a child is refused a place at the school due to over subscription, parents are able to ask for their child's name to be placed on a waiting list maintained by the school. In the case of admission to Reception this will be kept open until 31st December of the relevant year. In the case of other year groups this will be reviewed each term and parents should write to the school before the start of each term to indicate if they still wish to remain on the list. If a place later becomes available, it will be allocated in accordance with the admission criteria set out in this policy.

If parents are refused a place for their child at the school, they have the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel. Appeals should be made, in the first instance, in writing, to the Chair of Governors c/o the school within 20 school days of receiving notification, who will set in motion the procedure for convening an appeal panel. If this panel decides that a child should be offered a place at the school, then the child will be admitted.

Places must be allocated on the basis of the oversubscription criteria only. An applicant must not be given additional priority solely on the basis of having completed a supplementary information form. The admission authority must keep a clear record of any decisions on applications, including in-year applications.

Admissions to schools during the year outside the normal round of Admissions

Parents/Carers with a first preference application for 'In Year' transfers must forward the application to the Local Authority who will be co-ordinating all in-year applications.

Please view link for further details:

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/coordinatedschemes>

In line with the Code of Practice, all own admission authority schools such as Ombersley must, on receipt of an in-year application, notify the relevant Local Authority of its outcome and inform parents of their right to appeal against a refusal of a place.

The procedure for in-year admissions for Worcestershire residents is as follows;

- 1) Parent/Carer to obtain an application form (CA1), if a resident in Worcestershire, from any of the following sources;
 - Child's current school (if in Worcestershire).
 - School being applied for (if in Worcestershire)
 - Worcestershire Hub Centre (Tel 01905 678204)
 - Download form from website (www.worcestershire.gov.uk)
- 2) Parent/Carer to complete the application form and ensure form is counter-signed by current Headteacher (if already attending a Worcestershire School).
- 3) The parent should then forward the form onto the Pupil Admissions and Transfers Section to be processed.
- 4) The Local Authority will write to parents, normally within 10 school days, of the form being received to notify of the decision. Where it is not possible to offer a place, parents will be notified of the right of an appeal and in most cases, an alternative school will be offered. If there are insufficient places for all applications received at a time, then priority will be decided in accordance with the published admissions criteria for the school.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

- 1) Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1. The Governing Body asks that the application form CA1 is completed and sent direct to the school along with written documentation regarding the request for the out of year group application.
- 2) The Governing Body will make the decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. They will also take into account the views of the head teacher. **When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the Governing Body will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.**
- 3) Where the Governing Body agrees to 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 pupils are normally admitted to the school) the local authority and the Governing Body must process the application as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible, and on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. They must not give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

NB There is no statutory barrier to children being educated outside of their chronological age group. Whilst Parents have the legal right to request that the child be admitted outside of their normal age group, the final decision rests with the admission authority for the school.

The parents of pupils resident outside Worcestershire, but who wish to apply for a place at any Worcestershire school, must complete an application form provided by the "home" LA. (The "home" LA is defined as the Local Authority relevant to the child's home address). The "home" LA will ensure that the application details are passed onto Worcestershire LA for consideration in the allocation of school places, the "home" LA will notify of the decision – see item 4 above).

If there are no places available in the Year group at the time of application the Governors of the school operate a waiting list. Parents will need to contact the school directly in order to be included on this list. The criteria applied to the waiting list are the same as those above rather than on a first come, first served basis.

Fraudulent Applications

If it is found that information used to apply for a place at Ombersley Endowed First School is fraudulent, this place will be withdrawn, stating the reasons why. Parents/ Carers will have the right to appeal this decision, when they will be asked to provide proof of a bona fida residency, i.e. : council tax bill, utility bill and bank statement.

Fair Access Protocol

As part of the new Worcestershire Fair Access Protocol, incorporating the 'Hard to Place Protocol', all schools with Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 classes can be required to exceed the published admission number to admit pupils covered by the Protocol.

The Protocol must be consulted upon and developed in partnership with all schools in its area. Once the Protocol has been agreed by the majority of school in its area, all admission authorities must participate in it. Participation includes making available a representative who is authorised to participate in discussions, make decision on placing children via the Protocol, and admitting pupils when asked to do so in accordance with the Protocol, even when the school is full. Local authorities must provide admission authorities with reasonable notice and information as to how and when discussions around the placement of children via the Protocol will take place.

Decisions about admitting children under the Protocol can be made by one individual in an admission authority provided that suitable authority has been delegated to that individual. Admission authorities must ensure this process complies with relevant governance requirements.

Eligibility for the Fair Access Protocol does not limit a parent's right to make an in-year application to any school for their child. Admission authorities must process these application in accordance with their usual in year admission procedures. They must not refuse to admit such children on the basis that they may be eligible to be placed via the Fair Access protocol. The parent will continue to have the right of appeal for any place they have been refused, even if the child has been offered a school place via the Fair Access Protocol.

Parent's view should be taken into account when Fair Access Protocol admissions are considered. Fair Access Protocols should seek to place a child in a school that is appropriate to any particular needs that they may have. Where it has been agreed that a child will be considered under the Fair Access Protocol, a school must be allocated for that child within 20 school days. Once they have been allocated a school place via the Fair Access Protocol, arrangements should be made for the child to start at the school as soon as possible.

Policy agreed by the Governing Body: September 2023

Policy for review: September 2024