



“CREATIVITY, RESPONSIBILITY, RESPECT, AND HAPPINESS”

BLUE COAT CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Amended Determined Admissions Policy 2021

Committee responsible for this policy	Teaching and Learning committee
Policy initially approved by FGB	11 th March 2014
Policy reviewed/amended	25 th September 2015/12 th February 2016/24 th February 2017/12 th September 2017/22 nd January 2018, 18 th September 2018/26 th February 2019, 17 th September 2019 (FGB), 6 th July 2021(School Admissions Code compliance)
Policy review term	Annual
Policy due for review	Autumn 2020

Statement of Intent / Scope of the Policy

This Policy sets out the admission criteria for Blue Coat CE VA Primary School. (See also Appendix 1)

Pupils will be admitted at the beginning of the academic year (1st September) following their 4th birthday, without reference to ability or aptitude (normal admission round). The number of intended admissions for the year commencing September 2021 will be 45.

This policy and criteria should be read in conjunction with information available at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions or contact the Admissions & Transfers Team for a paper copy of the Guide for Parents & Carers.

Where applications for admissions exceed the number of places available, the following criteria will be applied, in the order set out below, to decide which children to admit.

- 1) A 'looked after child' (*a*) or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption(*b*) child arrangements order (*c*) or special guardianship order (*d*).
 - (a) A 'looked after child' is a child who is (i) in the care of a local authority, or (ii) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school. In Gloucestershire, such children are referred to as Children in Care.
 - (b) This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).
 - (c) Under the provisions of s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amend section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders.
 - (d) See Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).
 - (e) The 2021 School Admissions Code (the Code) requires children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be

- (f) in state care as a result of being adopted to be given equal first priority in admission arrangements, alongside looked after children (LAC) and children who were previously looked after by English local authorities (PLAC). This advice refers to these children as internationally adopted previously looked after children – “IAPLAC”.
- 2) Children who have a sibling attending the School and who will continue to do so when the younger child is admitted.

N.B. The Local Authority definition of a sibling, adopted by the Blue Coat Church of England Primary School, reads “a brother or sister, half-brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister or the child of the parent’s/carer’s partner as well as children who are brought together as a family by a same sex civil partnership. In every case, the child must be living in the same family unit at the same address.”

- 3) Children of families whose parents or parent or carer are active members of a Church of England church within the Benefice of Wotton-under-Edge with Ozleworth, North Nibley and Alderley (hereinafter known as the Tyndale Benefice). We define active members of the church as minimum monthly worship over a period of two years prior to application, most recently in the Tyndale Benefice. The Applicant will need to obtain confirmation from the vicar or minister of the church concerned.

N.B. If this criterion is applicable, please complete the Church Reference Form (as attached) and return to the school by **15th January 2021**.

- 4) Children of families whose parents or parent or carer are active members of a Christian place of worship (that is a member of Churches Together in England - www.churches-together.net). We define active members of the church as minimum monthly worship over a period of two years prior to application. The Applicant will need to obtain confirmation from the vicar or minister of the church concerned

N.B. If this criterion is applicable, please complete the Church Reference Form (as attached) and return to the school by **15th January 2021**.

- 5) Children for whom only this particular school is appropriate due to an exceptional medical condition. Applications under this criterion will only be considered if they are supported by a written statement from the child’s doctor. This must demonstrate that there is a very specific connection between the medical need and the facilities or resources of the school.

- 6) Any remaining places or in the event of oversubscription in any of the criteria above, places will be given to those children living closest to this school, measured in a straight line from the Ordnance Survey Point for the child’s home address (including flats) to the Ordnance Survey Point of the school, using the Local Authority’s computerized measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

- ❖ Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or with an Education Health Care Plan (EHC) will be admitted to the school even if the school is full.
- ❖ The school has signed up to the In-Year Fair Access Protocols held by the Local Authority. Should a vulnerable child within these protocols require a place at the school, they will take precedent over any child on the waiting list. (See Appendix 2)
- ❖ For the Autumn Term Intake of Reception aged children, if the school is oversubscribed, a waiting list will be held for the first two terms (the School has six terms). After the end of term two, applications on the waiting list will be treated under the In -Year provision.
- ❖ In-Year Admissions: As from September 2013 any applications for a school place made outside the normal year of entry are to be made directly to the school. The Local Authority maintains the statutory duty of being aware of all pupils and vacancies within schools/academies in Gloucestershire. Parents, should, therefore, contact the school in the first instance. In order to remain on the waiting list, applicants should contact the school in writing at the end of each term: there are 6 terms in each academic year. Waiting lists are held in line with the criteria outlined in this Admissions Policy.
- ❖ The Governing Body of Blue Coat CE VA Primary School acknowledges the update advice from the Department of Education that occasionally, parents/carers of “summer born” children (born between the 1st April and 31st August) may request to start the Reception Class of a school a whole academic year later. The Governing Body will make a decision on behalf of Blue Coat CE VA Primary School. We follow the Local Authority process which states that parents can only apply for a Reception place at a school once and must apply for a place during the standard application process timeline for their chronological year group, stating their reasons for requesting deferred entry to the following year.
- ❖ Parents may wish to seek a place for their child outside of the normal age group: in such circumstances the school will follow the rules set out in the School Admission Code.
- ❖ The term “normal admission round” refers to all applications for admission to the main year of entry of the school i.e. Reception for Infant and Primary Schools. Applications made during the normal admissions round will be made in advance of the academic year in which the child is due to start at the new school. Children are entitled to a full-time

- ❖ place, however, may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

- ❖ Transport: The school does not arrange school transport – please contact the Transport and Benefits team, Shire Hall, Gloucester GL1 2TP.

- ❖ In the event of a child being refused a place there is a right of appeal to an independent appeal process in accordance with guidelines. In the first instance, parents should contact the school for further information.

- ❖ In the event of oversubscription and in the event of a tie break situation, where two or more children live an identical distance from school, a process of random allocation will be followed. This is a manual process which will be overseen by an independent person.

General

The Governing Body reserves the right to review the Admissions Policy as necessary.

Cross Referenced: Data Protection Policy, Complaints Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy

Appendix 1: Class Organisation Arrangements

Due to a Pupil Admission Number (PAN) of 45 pupils, Blue Coat is subject to the need for mixed form classes (i.e. classes comprising of mixed year groups).

Currently, the school is structured by the following class format:

- 2 x Reception
- 1 x Year 1
- 1 x Year 1 & 2 mixed
- 1 x Year 2
- 1 x Year 3
- 1 x Year 3 & 4 mixed
- 1 x Year 4
- 1 x Year 5
- 1 x Year 5 & 6
- 1 x Year 6

Decisions of where to place children each year are carefully considered by the school's leaders. These decisions are based on the following criteria, which is shared with parents in the spring/summer term each year:

Basic Principles of Class Allocation

When allocating children to classes the school considers friendships first. Children are asked to name several of their best friends (and this sits alongside the teacher's knowledge of friendship groups in the younger year groups). The school cannot reasonably guarantee that each child will be with **all** of their best friends but leaders work on the basis that there will be **at least one** from the child's list. Forming new friendships is an important life skill.

Balancing Factors

After the initial stage, the school's leaders embark on a process of trying to balance a huge number of factors for each class, such as: ratios of genders, year groups, special needs and other vulnerable groups; any previous friendship issues; previous teachers etc. Several (hours of) meetings with a large number of staff from across key stages contribute towards in-depth discussions. A final draft is presented to senior leaders for a 'proof-check' where many of the above are again discussed along with any other information leaders can bring to the discussion.

Early Years: Reception Specific Criteria

In ascertaining the above, the school will consult with the child's pre-school setting whilst also soliciting the views of parents, particularly when considering friendships. Reception teachers will also visit the children's settings and use informal observations to contribute to the bigger picture of where a child may be best placed for their first year at Blue Coat. Reception teachers pay particular attention to children's social and emotional development when making these decisions.

Key Stage 1 & 2: Specific Criteria

Children whom are of the **younger age group (only)** when mixing classes are either allocated into the straight year group i.e. Year 1 or the mixed year group i.e. Year 1&2 class, based on specific criteria. The decision as to who goes where is one based on the **child**.

The school looks at each child's Personal Social and Emotional Development (PSED) when considering which class is more suitable. Some children may have a higher emotional resilience and maturity and will not only cope but thrive in learning alongside older peers. The school's teachers are well placed to make this call as to who should be allocated to the mixed class. This consideration of PSED is not made when dealing with the older of the two age groups being mixed i.e. Year 2 or 4 or 6.

Considering Other Factors

Clearly, a lot of information is taken in to account when organising new classes. However, sometimes there may be extra information that the school is not privy to that would be useful in ensuring pupils are placed in classes where they will thrive and be happy.

Blue Coat may give parents the opportunity to present such information in the **form of a letter** to the Assistant Headteachers within a set timeframe. Leaders do not respond to these letters but may consider the information when overseeing class organisation where they feel it is relevant.

Guarantees to grant requests for particular classes will not be made and irrelevant information is not taken into account when allocating pupils to classes.

The school cannot guarantee that siblings or multiple birth siblings can be in the same classes. Where there is a specific parental request then the school will consider both the advantages and disadvantages on a case-by-case basis for each pupil and for each year that they remain in the school.



Appendix 2: Fair Access Protocol

Blue Coat C of E Primary School will act within the Schools Admission Code 2014 to ensure that it follows a fair, consistent and transparent method of offering places to children, but it does support the county-wide principle of allowing children to access a local school place. The Schools Standards & Framework Act 1998, Section 86, requires admission authorities to only refuse admission of pupils where it may compromise education to do so and therefore the School Admission Code 2014 does make provision for admission authorities to admit above their admission number during the admissions process to meet parental demand. The Governing Body will consider all applications for a school place in line with the schools admission policy, taking individual cases into account in line with its exceeding PAN protocol – which sets out how the school will implement such flexibility in a transparent manner whilst ensuring sustainability of the whole school system. The protocol is that laid down by Gloucestershire County Council. (www.gloucestershire.gov.uk)