




“I have come in order that you might have life – life in all its fullness.”
John 10:10

Admissions Arrangements for School 2019–20, 2020–21 and 2021–22

Policy accepted by FGB on:	12/12/2018
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Statutory policy: <u>Yes/No</u> On school website: <u>Yes/No</u>	

ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS FOR SCHOOL (wording published online)

Christ Church “Admissions Statement” for 2019–20, 2020–21 and 2021–22

1. Choosing the right school for your child

The Good Schools Guide says: “It’s a nerve-wracking time, deciding where you would like your child to take his or her first steps into school. A good state primary school will not only launch your child into a happy and fulfilling education journey, but also engage you in the local community. The friends you and your child make there are likely to be long-standing ones.”

(<https://www.goodschoolsguide.co.uk/>)

The Good Schools Guide advises: “Taking that first step into primary education is crucial for you and your child, but how should you go about making that all important decision as to which [first] school is the one?”

- (i) **Know the process.** Check your local authority (LA) website for details of the catchment area for primary schools nearby, faith requirements and key dates.
- (ii) **Pay a visit.** Compare schools by visiting any you may consider. Meet the headteachers and watch how they interact with staff and children. Check out classrooms, cloakrooms and dining facilities. Observe children at work and play.
- (iii) **Academic matters.** Ask about the reading programme and what happens should children not progress as expected. Find out how you are expected to support learning at home. Are gifted children sufficiently challenged?
- (iv) **Encouragement and motivation.** Find out how children are rewarded and praised for hard work. Are good behaviour and manners valued?
- (v) **Keeping in touch.** Find out whether teachers are accessible either in person or by email/phone and who you should speak to if there’s a problem. Are parents welcomed onto school premises or kept at arm’s length? Look at the bullying policy and, above all, ask yourself whether you would be happy to leave your child there every day.”

2. Paying a visit to Christ Church

There are many ways to get to know our school. (See Appendix D.)

3. Respecting the distinctive Christian character and ethos of Christ Church

All parents/carers applying for places for their children at Christ Church C of E First School are invited to respect the distinctive Christian character and ethos of the school.

4. The admissions process

When your child is due to start school, you will be contacted by Somerset County Council (CC) (the LA) to make your choice of school. You will be notified of the school at which your child has been allocated a place. Somerset CC take due regard of the necessary arrangements required for the admission of pupils with disabilities.

Christ Church C of E First School currently has a planned Admission Number of 48. If the

number of children wanting places at the school is lower than this limit, places are offered to all children. However, if there are more applications than places available, oversubscription criteria are used to decide which children will be offered places. (See below for details.)

5. Admissions arrangements

These admission arrangements apply to all applications for admissions to Christ Church C of E First School for Reception entry in September and any in-year applications thereafter.

5.1 Introduction

Somerset CC is the admissions authority for Christ Church C of E First School (and all other Voluntary Controlled (VC) and County schools located within Somerset). The admission arrangements set out in this policy should be read in conjunction with the local authority's most up-to-date 2019 *Co-ordinated Primary Admission Scheme*.

5.2 The Published Admission Number (PAN)

Christ Church C of E First School Governing Body has set an Admission Number of 48 for the year of entry.

5.3 Applications to start school for the first time

These should be submitted to the home LA. If this is Somerset, applications can be made online at www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions

It is the parent's responsibility to keep online contact details up to date. Paper applications are available to download from the Somerset CC website at www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions, or upon request by telephoning Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224. Any supporting information must be received by the exemption period deadline using the appropriate Supplementary Information Form (SIF).

Visit and "like" the Somerset School Admissions Facebook page to receive updates and deadline reminders: <https://www.facebook.com/Somersetschooladmissions/>

Applications and SIFs must be received by 23.59 hours on 15 January prior to the September start of the academic year applied for (e.g. 15/1/19 for a 1/9/19 start, 15/1/20 for a 1/9/20 start, 15/1/21 for a 1/9/21 start), otherwise the application will be recorded as late and cannot be considered until all on-time applications have been dealt with.

Decisions in connection with on-time applications will be sent out by email (for online applicants) or second class post sent out on 16 April (or next working day).

5.4 Admissions during the academic year

These must be submitted directly to the school using the LA in-year application form (hard copy only).

Applications will be processed in strict date order with a 4pm daily working day deadline for receipt of applications. A decision will be notified in writing by second class post to the applicant within ten school days. Where a place cannot be provided, the right of appeal will apply.

Proof of address may be required to be submitted with the application. This will be either the formal “exchange of contracts” letter from the solicitor for a house purchase, a recent utility bill or the signing of a minimum of a six month tenancy agreement. The LA reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support a claim of residence.

Where there are more applications than places available within a particular year group, applications will be considered against the published oversubscription criteria and allocated up to the Admission Number/Limit. (For Christ Church this is currently 48.)

Places will not be allocated more than six school weeks or half a term in advance of being required.

5.5 Oversubscription criteria

Places will be allocated strictly in accordance with the equal preference with ranking allocation method.

, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) if the school is named, then:

1. Children Looked After (CLA) – children who are in the care of an LA or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a residence/child arrangement order or special guardianship order. (See Important note (i), below.)
2. Children without a Statement of SEN, identified with a sensory, physical or medical disability (High Needs Pupils), where a multi-agency professional team has identified the school as the nearest suitable school. (See Important note (ii), below.)
3. Children living in the catchment area, with an older sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.
4. (a) Children living in the rural catchment area. (See Important note (iii), below.)
(b) Children living in the catchment area.
5. Children living outside the catchment area, with an older sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.
6. Children living outside the catchment area and registered in an infant, first or middle school (within the transfer school catchment area).
7. Children living outside the catchment area, with an older sibling at the linked junior school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.
8. (a) Children and/or parent(s) who are practising members of the founding religious body of the school (e.g. Anglican).
(b) Children and/or parent(s) who are practising members of other churches or religious denominations. (See Important note (iv), below.)
9. (a) Children of staff employed by the school for at least two years prior to the application closing date.

(b) Children of staff employed by the school recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. (See Important note (vi), below.)

10. Children not satisfying a higher criterion.

5.6 Somerset Fair Access Protocol

The agreed Fair Access Protocol (FAP) exist in order to balance the needs of the child and those of the school. Key points:

- No school, including those with available places, is asked to take a disproportionate number of children who have been excluded from other schools, or who have challenging behaviour.
- There is no duty to comply with parental preference when allocating places through the Protocol but it is expected the wishes of the parents are taken into account. When seeking to place a child under a Protocol, all schools should be treated in a fair, equitable and consistent manner.
- A school will not be required to automatically take another child with challenging behaviour in the place of a child excluded from the school.
- The FAP should not be used as a means to circumvent the normal in-year admissions process. A parent can apply for a place as an in-year admission at any point and is entitled to an appeal when a place is not offered.

For more information, refer to:

- *Somerset Fair Access Protocol for Admission to Schools* (see Appendix E, below)
- *Fair Access Protocols: Principles and Process – Departmental Advice* (DfE, Nov 2012)

5.7 Important notes re oversubscription criteria

- (i) A looked-after child is a child who is (a) in the care of an LA, or (b) being provided with accommodation by an LA in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).
- (ii) Criterion 2 enables schools to plan with SEN Officers for the school entry of children with physical, medical or sensory impairments. This includes children that are in receipt of Early Years School Action Plus funding at level 3 and/or where significant capital works (e.g. accessible toilets, changing space, access to classrooms) are required and/or children that are identified as requiring a place at a Resource Base attached to a mainstream school.
- (iii) “Rural catchment” is defined as living in the catchment area of a school and where there is no alternative school within the statutory walking distance of the home address.
- (iv) “Practising” is defined as at least once a month for at least six months prior to the application closing date attendance at church by at least one parent and/or child. This must be confirmed by a member of the clergy on a SIF.
- (v) In the event of oversubscription within any of the oversubscription criteria listed above, preference will be given to applicants who live closest to the school, as measured in a straight line by a Geographical Information System (GIS) method from the address point of the school site to the address point for the pupil's home. Where two distances are equal and it is therefore not possible to differentiate between them, priority will be

determined by drawing of lots supervised by someone independent of the school.

(vi) Criterion 9 – the Headteacher or Governing Body of the relevant school will be asked to verify point (b).

(vii) Criteria 4, 8 and 9 – children considered under sub-criterion (a) will have a priority over children considered under sub-criterion (b).

6. Distance measurements

For the purpose of measuring home to school distance, all calculations will be measured using a straight-line measurement from the geocoded point of the home to the geocoded point of the school using the LA's GIS mapping system.

7. Equal preference with ranking

The equal preference with ranking allocation system requires the admissions authority to consider all preferences received for a particular school (first, second, third, fourth and fifth) equally and, where the school is oversubscribed, apply the oversubscription criteria. Where more than one preference can be met, the LA will offer the highest ranking preference.

8. Home address

The home address is very important, as school places are allocated on the basis of the home address of each child. A child's home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with parents or carers.

Documentary evidence of home ownership or suitable rental agreement may be required, together with proof of permanent residence at the property concerned. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of an intended future address, unless the house move can be confirmed through the formal "exchange of contracts" or the signing of a minimum of a six month formal tenancy agreement from a letting agency. Please note private letting agreements may not be accepted as proof of residence.

An address change due to a move to live with family or friends will not be considered until the move has taken place and suitable proof of residency has been obtained. Proof that a move from the previous address has taken place may also be required, e.g. proof of exchange of contracts, a tenancy agreement showing the end date of the tenancy or a notice to quit from the landlord or a repossession notice. The LA reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support any claim of residence, which could include contacting the estate agent, solicitor, landlord or relevant professional. A representative of the LA may carry out a home visit(s) without prior notice to verify a pupil's home address.

An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. Fraudulent claims relating to the home address of a particular child may lead to the withdrawal of any offer of a school place.

Proof of address will not be required for Traveller families where the address is confirmed by the Traveller Education Service. A foster carer will not be required to supply proof of address for a child placed with them by an LA.

The LA and/or admissions authority must be notified of any change of address during the admissions procedure.

9. Parent/carer

These are natural parents, whether they are married or not, or any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person. Also, 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).

10. Parental responsibility

A mother automatically has parental responsibility for her child from birth.

A father usually has parental responsibility if he's:

- married to the child's mother
- listed on the birth certificate (after a certain date, depending on which part of the UK the child was born in).

For information on how to gain parental responsibility please click on this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/parental-rights-responsibilities/apply-for-parental-responsibility>

11. Relevant area

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 requires LAs to establish Relevant Area(s) for admission policy consultations. The Relevant Area is the area in which admissions authorities must consult with schools regarding their proposed admission arrangements before finalising them.

The Education Act 2002 requires the LA to consult on and review its Relevant Area every two years.

The relevant area for Somerset admissions authority is the geographical area for Somerset. The relevant area for VA, Foundation, Academies and Free Schools is the district in which the school is located (i.e. Mendip, South Somerset, Taunton Deane, West Somerset or Sedgemoor).

12. Sibling

For the purpose of admissions, a sibling is defined as children living at the same permanent home address.

13. Supplementary Information Form

In order for applications to be considered against criterion 8, applicants will need to use the appropriate SIF to demonstrate their ability to meet the particular criterion. The SIF will need to be completed and signed by a member of the clergy and submitted along with the school place application. (See Appendices A, B and C.)

14. Appeals

Applicants whose school place application is turned down have the legal right to appeal to an independent appeal panel against the decision to refuse admission. Details concerning how to appeal are explained in the decision letter sent out by email or post on the published dates. Information on the timetable for the appeals process is available on the LA website by 28 February each year.

15. Waiting lists

The LA will maintain a waiting list for the entry year group for every oversubscribed Community and Voluntary Controlled school. This will be maintained until the end of the first term in the new academic year. The waiting list will hold the names of every child formally refused admission, in ranked order according to the oversubscription criteria. Waiting lists will be reordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever a child joins or leaves the waiting list. If a place becomes available within the Published Admission Number, this will be offered to the highest ranked child at that time.

Children who are the subject of a direction by an LA to admit or who are allocated to the school in accordance with the In-Year Fair Access Protocols, will take precedence over those children on a waiting list. Please note: *the LA has delegated responsibility for waiting lists back to those schools who wish to keep a waiting list for further year groups or for longer periods of time. Please check the individual school's website for further details.*

16. Withdrawal of places

The LA will consider withdrawing the offer of a place at a Community or Voluntary Controlled school if:

- the place has been offered on the basis of an application which is subsequently found to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading;
- if a school is offered on the basis of an address that is subsequently found to be different from a child's permanent home address then that place is liable to be withdrawn;
- the parent/carer has not responded to the offer within a reasonable period of time and a further opportunity has been given for the parent to respond within ten days having explained that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not.

17. Statement of Special Educational Needs/Education, Health and Care Plan

Children with a Statement of SEN or EHCP naming a Community or Voluntary Controlled school will be admitted to that school within the Published Admission Number before any other applications are considered.

18. Admission of children below compulsory school age

Parents are entitled to a part-time or full-time place at school for their child in the September following their fourth birthday. Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. A child becomes of compulsory school age when they reach the age of five and, where a parent has elected to register their child at school, they must start school on a full-time basis in the term following their fifth birthday.

19. Deferred entry

Parents offered a place for their child have a right to defer entry, or to take a place up part-time, until the start of the term beginning immediately after their child has reached compulsory school age. However, places cannot be deferred until the next academic year.

20. Summer born children

Parents of summer born children may request that they are admitted into Reception rather than Year 1 when they become of compulsory school age. The parent is required to make an on-time application for the child's normal age group but can submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time. The LA will then ensure that the parent receives a response to the request before the primary national offer date.

If their request is agreed, their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If their request is refused, the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an in-year application for admission to Year 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday.

Where a parent's request is agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year.

One admissions authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admissions authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference school. Please see the link below for advice from the DfE on the admission of summer born children:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389448/Summer_born_admissions_advice_Dec_2014.pdf

21. Retained or accelerated entry

The LA will consider applications for retained or accelerated entry (a year group other than the child's chronological age) to a Community or Voluntary Controlled school on a case by case basis. The reasons for the request should be fully explained on an application form, to be submitted at the same time as the school place application. The LA will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. The LA will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

The process for requesting such an admission is as follows:

- The parent/carer is required to make an application for their child's normal age group but can submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time.
- The parent/carer is required to submit a request for admission out of the normal age group and attach supporting evidence as necessary. The Governing Body have the right to request further evidence that may be required.
- The LA will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.
- The LA will write to the parent with the outcome and set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

- In the case of applications for summer born children to be admitted out of their normal age group the parent will receive the outcome before the primary national offer day.
- If their request is agreed, their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If their request is refused, the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an in-year application for admission to Year 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday.
- Where a parent's request is agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year.
- One admissions authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admissions authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference school.

22. Phased/staggered entry

To help children settle smoothly into school, some schools operate different start dates for children entering Reception classes. This is known as "Phased or Staggered Entry".

23. Issues relating to shared residency arrangements

Where shared residence arrangements are in place and parents/carers of the child submit two separate applications for different schools, the LA requires parents to resolve matters between themselves, taking legal advice if necessary, and inform the LA which application should be processed. The LA will not become involved in private disputes. If more than one offer of a school place is made, the LA would expect one of the places to be withdrawn by the parent. If this is not the case, when the child starts school, the alternative school place will be withdrawn by the LA.

Each parent may be required to write to the LA and inform them of the number of days each week the child spends with them. Where the child spends equal time with both parents, the LA may ask for additional information including evidence of which parent/carer is in receipt of child benefit and/or the name of the GP surgery at which the child is registered.

24. Multiple birth applications (e.g. twins)

Where the last place within the Published Admission Number is allocated to a multiple birth application, a place(s) will be allocated to any siblings above the Published

Admission Number at the point of allocation. This will ensure that multiple birth siblings can be allocated places at the same school (sibling definition still applies).

This includes situations whereby admitting multiple birth siblings would breach the infant class size legislation of a statutory limit of 30 infants (Key Stage 1 children) per qualified teacher.

25. Children from outside the UK

The LA will process applications for children who are citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA) if proof of the Somerset address and the expected date of arrival in the UK are provided by 15 January for primary phase applications and 31 October for secondary phase applications. The application can then be considered on this address. If proof of the

Somerset address is not available by the dates above, the application will be considered on the current address. A list of the countries in the EEA can be found at <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/international/social-security-agreements/list-of-countries/>

The LA will also process applications for UK citizens living in any other country if proof of the Somerset address and the expected date of arrival back in the UK are provided by 15 January for primary phase applications and 31 October for secondary phase applications. The application can then be considered on this address. If proof of the Somerset address is not available by the dates above, the application will be considered on the current address. The only exceptions are children of UK service personnel and other Crown servants (including diplomats) returning to the area.

The LA will not allocate a place to any non-EEA citizen moving into Somerset from outside the UK prior to their arrival in the country. The LA will require copies of the passports, appropriately endorsed visas and proof of residency – see home address definition (at 8, above).

26. Children of UK service personnel

The admissions authority endeavours to ensure that their admission arrangements support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children.

In-year applications are usually considered for admission up to a maximum of half a term in advance of the place being taken up. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area, where a place can be made available up to a year in advance of being required providing the appropriate documentation is provided as proof of posting (an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting).

Usually, a place may be allocated prior to actual residency only on receipt of exchange of contracts or a formal signed rental agreement. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area. This means that, providing the application is accompanied by an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting, the admissions authority will process the application. If proof of a home address is not available at this stage, the admissions authority will accept a unit postal address or quartering area address. If the parent/carer is moving to the area as a result of leaving the armed forces, then no special consideration will be given to the application under the grounds of the application being made by a service family.

For further information, please refer to the DfE explanatory note on Admission of Children of Crown Servants: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/461481/Admission_of_children_of_crown_servants.pdf

27. Children Looked After (CLA)

The LA will endeavour to secure a place for a CLA at the catchment or nearest school to the address at which they are placed. An LA has the power to direct the admissions authority for any maintained school (e.g. Voluntary Controlled, Community, Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools) in England to admit a child who is looked after by the LA, even when the school is full. The LA **must not** choose a school from which the child is permanently excluded but may choose a school whose infant classes are already at the maximum size. Before deciding to give a direction, the LA **must** consult the admissions authority of the school it proposes to direct. In the case of an academy an LA can request that the Secretary of State consider directing the admission of a CLA.

For more information, refer to the school's *Children Looked After Policy*.

APPENDIX A: SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM (SIF) FOR VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS – INTRODUCTION

This form must be completed and submitted to Somerset CC if you would like your application for a Voluntary Controlled school to be considered under criterion 8 of the oversubscription criteria relating to regular church attendance, which is:

- Children and/or parent(s) who are practising members of the founding religious body of the school (e.g. Anglican).
- Children and/or parent(s) who are practising members of other churches or religious denominations.

“Practising” is defined as at least once a month for at least six months prior to the application closing date attendance at church by at least one parent and/or child.

Please ensure that the attached form is completed by you and signed by the relevant church representative (vicar, priest, minister, pastor, church warden) and submitted to Somerset CC. (Deadlines may vary from year to year. In the past this has included early February for primary admissions and early December for secondary admissions.) For in-year admissions, it must be submitted directly to the school alongside an in-year application form.

Failure to send the correctly completed SIF to Somerset CC by the closing date will mean that your application cannot be considered under the church attendance criterion.

Please return form to:

Admissions and Entitlements Team
PPC402C
Somerset County Council
County Hall
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 4DY

APPENDIX B: SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM (SIF) FOR VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS – NOTES FOR CLERGY

Notes for clergy or those responsible and authorised to sign SIFs for those applying to church schools under a church attendance criterion.

The recommendation of the Bath and Wells DBE is that it is best practice to have a sub-committee of at least three members, including clergy, church wardens and those with responsibility for Sunday school, to consider these requests and be authorised to sign the form if it is agreed appropriate.

Please also note that if this form is not received by Somerset CC prior to the published deadline, the child cannot be considered eligible under any church attendance criteria.

In order for the application to be considered under any church attendance criteria within the school's admissions arrangements, the following must be ensured:

1. The DBE does recommend that the child or a parent has attended actual worship and that attendance at toddler groups or other activities that are held at the church does NOT meet the requirements.
2. The completed form must be received by Somerset CC. (Deadlines may vary from year to year. In the past this has included early February for primary admissions and early December for secondary admissions.) For in-year admissions, the parent/carer must submit it directly to the school alongside an in-year application form.
3. For applicants who have recently, or are about to move to a different area, the SIF should be completed by the clergy at the church where they have been regularly worshipping. It is the responsibility of the applicant to organise this and ensure that the SIF is completed and sent in on time.

Please Note:

The application process is a legal one and every effort **MUST** be made to ensure that applications and any supplementary forms are completed accurately and on time. If applicants are unsuccessful, they have the right to appeal. **Clergy should not be pressured into signing a form if they know that the applicant does not, or are in doubt as to whether the applicant does, meet the criteria laid down by the school. This is one reason why a committee should consider every application. It is also particularly helpful where there is an interregnum or where clergy have been in post less than six months.**

APPENDIX C: SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM FOR VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS

Please complete your child's details, then give this form to your clergy leader (priest/minister/pastor), who will complete the remaining part of the form.

Details of Child/Children

Applicant's Name:.....

Child's Full Name:.....

Child's Date of Birth:.....

Details of Church and Church Representative

Name and Address of Church:.....
.....

Name and Position of Church Representative.....

Church Denomination (e.g. Anglican, Methodist).....

Tel:.....

Declaration

I, (insert name).....

confirm that the child and/or parent(s)/carer(s) identified above has attended

(name of church).....

at least once a month for a minimum of six months prior to the date of application.

Signed:

Date:

Please return form to: Admissions Team, PPC402C, Somerset County Council,
County Hall, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4DY

APPENDIX D: YOUR INVITATION TO VISIT (WEBSITE WORDING)

Your invitation to visit

There are many ways to get to know our school. Here are some of the key options.

Information mornings

The best way to get to know Christ Church is by coming to visit. Information mornings provide an opportunity for parents/carers/families to make an informal visit to see the school in action and to meet pupils and staff.

Please enquire by email to sch.152@educ.somerset.gov.uk or phone 01373 463781.

Personal tours

On a personal tour you will be shown around the school, have an introductory discussion with a senior member of staff appropriate to your enquiry, and get to meet some of the children. The best time to see around is in the morning during term time, when you can meet staff and pupils in class. A personal tour normally takes about 45 minutes. Please fill in the form or phone the school office on 01373 463781 for more details. There is absolutely no obligation to take your enquiry further after a visit.

Other opportunities to visit

In addition to the above, parents/carers/families are also welcome to visit us at one of our many and varied school events. These include concerts, church services, sports events, Christmas fayre and summer fete.

Please enquire by email to sch.152@educ.somerset.gov.uk or phone 01373 463781.

APPENDIX E: SOMERSET FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL FOR ADMISSION TO SCHOOLS

Somerset Fair Access Protocol for Admission to Schools for the Academic Years 2017–2020

(i) Legislation

The February 2007 Admissions Code placed a duty on each local authority (LA) to develop a Fair Access Protocol (FAP). The latest revision of the Code, in force from December 2014, restates the principles and scope of the Protocol. All admission authorities (state funded schools) **must** participate in their LA's FAP. Where Somerset's Protocol refers to "schools" this relates to all state funded schools, including Academies and Free Schools.

(ii) Key principles of Fair Access Protocols (2014 Admissions Code)

- Each LA **must** have a FAP (*School Admissions Code 2012*, para. 3.9), agreed with the majority of schools in its area to ensure that – outside the normal admissions round – unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. All admission authorities **must** participate in the FAP, including Academies and Free Schools, who are required to abide by the locally agreed FAP under their funding agreements.
- Unplaced children are those not on a school roll, whose parents have been unable to secure a school place using usual In-Year Admissions procedures. It is expected that parents will have applied to all the schools within statutory walking distance of their home address.
- In all cases, the LA's duty to safeguard the child is paramount. Children out of school may be at risk; schools, with the Admissions and Entitlements Team, Education Welfare Service and any other relevant representatives of the LA must do their utmost to ensure that children are not out of school for extended periods of time.
- The agreed Protocol must ensure that the best interests of the child are of paramount importance while ensuring that no school, including those with available places, is asked to take a disproportionate number of children who have been excluded from other schools, or who have challenging behaviour. (Challenging behaviour will normally be defined as behaviour resulting in a number of fixed term exclusions and/or where the previous school indicates a serious behaviour issue; or children in receipt of High Needs Funding for BESD or ASD; or persistent poor attendance below 85% over the last two academic years.)
- A school will not be required to automatically take another child with challenging behaviour in the place of a child excluded from the school.

It is recognised that successful models have a Protocol developed and agreed with schools and Academies, data shared with all schools and Academies so that the process is transparent, panels that include headteachers that meet on a regular basis in areas to discuss individual pupils and partnerships.

(iii) Operating the Fair Access Protocol

The aim of this Protocol is to place a child in school or alternative provision within 20 days of application.

(iv) Escalation procedures

If a school fails to respond, or refuses to admit a pupil within 7 calendar days of being asked to take a pupil under the FAP, the escalation procedure will be initiated. In cases where the Panel for Excluded and Vulnerable Pupils (PEVP) has requested a place, school reasons for refusal to admit will be reviewed by the area panel before initiation of the escalation procedure. In cases where a parent is unhappy with the type of provision agreed, the decision will be reviewed by PEVP, but there is no further right of appeal. Please note that if a parent is in agreement with the decision to return their child to a mainstream school but is not in agreement with the school identified, there will be no further review of the decision by PEVP and parents will be advised of their right to apply for their preferred school using normal in-year admissions procedures.

1. Categories of children to be included in the Fair Access Protocol

The list of children to be included in a FAP **must**, as a minimum, include the following children of compulsory school age who have difficulty securing a school place:

Categories of children to be included in the Fair Access Protocol	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	Usual In-Year Admissions Procedure	In-Year Admission under Fair Access – placement by the Admissions and Entitlements Team	In-Year Admission under Fair Access – placement by the PEVP
a) children from the criminal justice system or Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) or alternative provision who need to be reintegrated into mainstream education			✓
b) children who have been out of education for two months or more (not including children registered as EHE whose parents are responsible for providing education)		✓	
c) children of Gypsies, Roma, Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers		✓	
d) children who are homeless		✓	
e) children with unsupportive family backgrounds for whom a place has not been sought, i.e. families working with Children’s Social Care or a health professional		✓	

f) children who are carers		✓	
g) children with special educational needs, disabilities or medical conditions (but without a statement)		✓	
The Somerset Fair Access Protocol will also apply to			
h) children known to the police and a number of other agencies		✓	
i) children who have to move school because of domestic violence (whether staying in a refuge or with friends/other relatives)		✓	
j) Year 6 and Year 10 pupils (from summer term)		✓	
k) Year 11 pupils		✓	
l) children of UK Service personnel		✓	
m) any other children who arrive in Somerset outside the normal admissions round who have difficulty securing a place		✓	
n) children at risk of permanent exclusion (PEX)			✓
o) children whose behaviour is a cause for concern		✓	
p) children with poor attendance of 85% or less in the current or previous academic year		✓	

Where children fall into four or more of the Level 2 categories, consideration may be given to whether they should be discussed by the area PEVP.

2. Deciding when to refer an application for action under the Fair Access Protocol

Under the School Admissions Code all schools and Academies must notify the LA of every application and every outcome. The Somerset County Council (SCC) in-year procedures should be followed in all cases.

- 2.1** The operation of the FAP is triggered when the information provided by a parent on an in-year application form or other information obtained by a school following receipt of an in-year application form leads to the Governing Body taking the decision to refuse to admit a child because the child has challenging behaviour and the school already has admitted a particularly high number of children with challenging behaviour compared to other local schools.

The majority of children requiring a school place will continue to be admitted to their local school in accordance with the usual admission procedures, rather than through this Protocol.

This Protocol does not apply to children who do not live in Somerset. The parent of a child refused admission in this case has the right to appeal to an independent school admission appeal panel.

- 2.2** The FAP is not a means for admission authorities to avoid their legal responsibilities to meet parental preference. Therefore, where a parent requests a school place and the school has a vacancy in the relevant year groups, there is no need for the application to be referred under the FAP unless the requirements set out in paragraph 2.3 apply.
- 2.3** Where a Governing Body does not wish to admit a child with challenging behaviour outside the normal admissions round it must refer the case to the Admissions and Entitlements Team for possible action under the FAP by email as soon as possible, but in the case of an Own Admission Authority not more than 10 school days after the initial approach or in the case of a VC or Community School not more than 5 school days. This will normally only be appropriate where the school can provide evidence that it has a particularly high proportion of children with challenging behaviour or previously excluded children. The LA will take no action under the FAP when a child is already on roll at a school within a reasonable distance of their home address, as such children are not unplaced.
- 2.4** Paragraph 2.3 does not apply to a child looked after, a previously looked after child or a child with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) naming the school in question, as these children **must not** be refused admission on the basis of challenging behaviour.

Admissions authorities **must not** refuse to admit a child thought to be potentially disruptive, or likely to exhibit challenging behaviour, on the grounds that the child is first to be assessed for SEN. In deciding whether a child is ready for mainstream school, the child must be placed on roll and admitted to school in the first instance, where their needs can be assessed, before seeking appropriate support from the relevant agencies. This does not apply to children already attending PRUs, whose placements will be agreed through the area PEVPs.

- 2.5** Those children for whom English is an additional language will not be considered as “challenging” under the Somerset FAP. Permanently excluded pupils are also not included in the FAP and are managed in line with the Statutory Guidance on Exclusions via the area PEVPs; however, they are included in the equitable share data used by panels to identify school places for unplaced children managed through the Protocol.

3. Fair Access Protocol arrangements

On receipt of the in-year application form by the school, the Governing Body/Admissions Committee/Academy Trust will consider the request.

The admission will be **agreed** as:

Level 1: Standard In-Year Admission

Level 2: In-Year Admission Procedure under Fair Access (Inform the Admissions and Entitlements Team requesting the primary vulnerability category to be logged on the equitable share data)

Or the admission will be **refused** as:

Level 2: In-Year Admission Procedure under Fair Access (Refer to Admissions and Entitlements Team for consideration of placement under equitable share)

Level 3: In-Year Admission Procedure under Fair Access (Refer to Admissions and Entitlements Team for referral to PEVP)

- 3.1** For children considered under Level 1, usual in-year admission procedures apply.
- 3.2** For children refused a place under Level 2, the LA Admissions and Entitlements Team will consider the case, advise the parent(s) and if the child remains unplaced will, if appropriate, request a school place demonstrating fair and equitable share. The In-Year Team with the Admissions and Entitlements Team Leader or Access and Admissions Manager will determine the placement using the equitable share data, seeking to protect any one school from a disproportionate number of placements of children with challenging behaviour. In addition, where possible, the panel will also take account of the circumstances of the individual pupil. In deciding a placement, every effort will be made to ensure that transport arrangements, which may be the responsibility of parents, are reasonable and cost effective.
- 3.3** Children considered by Admissions and Entitlements to meet the criteria under Level 3, will be referred to the Area PEVP. PEVP will determine a school place with a supported planned integration as necessary. Places will be identified using the equitable share data, seeking to protect any one school from a disproportionate number of placements of children with challenging behaviour. In addition, where possible, the panel will also take account of the circumstances of the individual pupil and which school will be best able to meet their needs. In deciding a placement, every effort will be made to ensure that transport arrangements, which may be the responsibility of parents, are reasonable and cost effective. If the panel agree the pupil is not ready for admission to mainstream school, alternative provision may be offered to parents.
- 3.4** The departmental guidance from the DfE, *Fair Access Protocols: Principles and Process*, expects that all parties will act with a sense of urgency to identify a school place for any child who has difficulty securing one or who falls under the FAP. All schools, including Academies, are expected to respond with a decision to requests by LAs to admit under FAPs within seven calendar days.
- 3.5** There is no duty for LAs or admission authorities to comply with parental preference when allocating places through the FAP. The parent of a child refused admission under this Protocol still has a right to apply and appeal to an independent admission appeal panel for their preferred school(s).
- 3.6** The fact that the Admission Number has been reached or exceeded cannot be given as a reason for not admitting a pupil under this Protocol.
- 3.7** It is acknowledged that some schools may hold waiting lists during the academic year. There is no requirement for a child who has been refused a place on the grounds of their challenging behaviour and referred to the LA under FAP to be added to the school's waiting list. However,

the School Admissions Code, paragraph 2.14, requires children being placed by the LA under Fair Access to have priority over children on a waiting list.

- 3.8** Schools must not require that an appeal be heard before a child is admitted under the Protocol, and must not refuse a child on the basis that an appeal was previously unsuccessful.
- 3.9** Statutory powers of direction and the rights of schools to object to the Schools Adjudicator are set out below.
- 3.10** Should a school feel within the first term following admission that a pupil falls into one of the categories listed under the FAP and is displaying challenging behaviour, contact should be made with the Service Manager, Access and Admissions or the relevant Area PRU Head for a discussion. Evidence will be required. If agreed, the admission will be added to the equitable share data against the school. The school may be required to send a representative to a panel meeting if the child is to be considered by PEVP. Please note that a referral back to the LA will not result in the pupil being removed from the school roll other than in very exceptional circumstances as determined by PEVP, and only with the agreement of parents.
- 3.11** The LA is required to include an overview of admissions under the FAP and identify any issues in its operation in its annual report to the Schools Adjudicator.

4. Record-keeping

A record will be kept of all pupils that fall into a vulnerability category or are placed using this Protocol on Capita ONE (please note that Level 2 admissions will only be logged if notified to the Admissions and Entitlement Team by schools). The Admissions and Entitlements Team, Access Casework Officer and SEN Team will log all relevant admissions on to each child's "relocation tab". For equitable share purposes, this will include those that fall into any of the categories (a) to (p) listed in this Protocol, children placed by the SEN Team with an Education Health Care Plan for BESD and ASD, permanently excluded pupils placed by PEVP and successful managed transfers when notified to the area Access Casework Officer. Approaches and actual admissions to schools will be logged under the appropriate level. The following information will be recorded:

- All approaches for children that meet the fair access criteria made to schools under this Protocol
- All admissions to schools of children that meet the fair access criteria under this Protocol
- Category and level under which the child falls
- Team that has made the approach, e.g. Admissions, Access or SEN

- Current status of the approach
- Notice to direct date

Approach dates and on-roll dates will be recorded, and will provide data on the length of time the process has taken. Area equitable share data will be sent with each approach for a place under Fair Access. Reports will also be produced as necessary/on demand and shared with all schools and relevant partners. Schools are required by the School Admissions Code to notify the LA of all in-year applications and admissions to ensure that the LA has up-to-date records of numbers

on roll in all year groups. It is also requested that schools alert the LA to children they believe are without education provision, if they become aware of them, for safeguarding purposes.

5. Area Panels for Excluded and Vulnerable Pupils (PEVPs)

The role of PEVPs is to consider Level 3 cases and those children who have been permanently excluded who are ready to be integrated back into mainstream education. The panels will also monitor the number of Fair Access placements and record managed transfers within its area when schools notify the area Casework Officer of a successful fresh start. Notification of a successful managed transfer must include the reason for the fresh start, e.g. at risk of PEx or very poor attendance.

The LA will provide alternative provision for any unplaced child via the PEVP while negotiations with schools under this Protocol are ongoing, if the approach for a school place has not been resolved within 20 days.

6. Training and guidance for schools

The LA will offer training in all aspects of the Somerset Fair Access Policy to all Governors and to school staff on request.

7. Powers of direction

The School Admissions Code 2012 summarises the powers of direction given to LAs under sections 96 and 97 of the 1998 Education Act, and the differing requirements in relation to admissions to Academies, as follows:

3.16 Local authority powers of direction (general) A local authority has the power to direct the admission authority for any maintained school (except one for which the LA is the admission authority) in its area to admit a child even when the school is full. The local authority can only make such a direction in respect of a child in the local authority's area who has been refused entry to, or has been permanently excluded from, every suitable school within a reasonable distance. The local authority **must** choose a school that is a reasonable distance from the child's home and from which the child is not permanently excluded. It **must not** choose a sixth-form that selects by ability unless the child meets the selection requirements, or a school that would have to take measures to avoid breaking the rules on infant class sizes if those measures would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

3.17 Before deciding to give a direction, the local authority **must** consult the governing body of the school, the parent of the child and the child if they are over compulsory school age. If, following consultation, the local authority decides to direct, it **must** inform the governing body and head teacher of the school. The governing body can appeal by referring the case to the Schools Adjudicator within 15 days. If it does this, the governing body **must** tell the local authority. The local authority **must not** make a direction until the 15 days have passed and the case has not been referred.

3.18 If the case is referred to the Adjudicator, the Adjudicator may either uphold the direction or determine that another maintained school **must** admit the child. The Adjudicator's decision is

binding. The Adjudicator **must not** direct a school to admit a child if this would require the school to take measures to avoid breaking the rules on infant class sizes and those measures would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

3.19 Local authority powers of direction (looked after children) A local authority also has the power to direct the admission authority for any maintained school in England to admit a child who is looked after by the local authority, even when the school is full. The local authority **must not** choose a school from which the child is permanently excluded but may choose a school whose infant classes are already at the maximum size.

3.20 Before deciding to give a direction, the local authority **must** consult the admission authority of the school it proposes to direct. The admission authority **must** tell the local authority within 7 days whether it is willing to admit the child. If, following consultation, the local authority decides to direct, it **must** inform the admission authority, the governing body (if the school is a voluntary controlled or community school), the local authority that maintains the school, and the head teacher. The admission authority can appeal by referring the case to the Schools Adjudicator within 7 days. If the child has been permanently excluded from two other schools and the most recent exclusion was within the previous two years, the governing body (if the school is a voluntary controlled or community school) may also refer the case to the Adjudicator. The admission authority or governing body **must not** refer the case unless it considers that admitting the child would seriously prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. If the admission authority or governing body does refer the case, it **must** tell the local authority that looks after the child. The local authority **must not** make a direction until the 7 days have passed and the case has not been referred.

3.21 If the case is referred to the Adjudicator, the Adjudicator may either uphold the direction or determine that another maintained school in England **must** admit the child. The Adjudicator's decision is binding. The Adjudicator **must not** direct an alternative school to admit a child unless the local authority that looks after the child agrees, nor if the child is permanently excluded from that school, nor if the admission of the child would seriously prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources.

3.22 Secretary of State power of direction (Academies) Where a local authority will best meet the needs of any child, it can ask the Academy to admit that child but has no power to direct it to do so. The local authority and the Academy will usually come to an agreement, but if the Academy refuses to admit the child, the local authority can ask the Secretary of State to intervene. The Secretary of State has the power under an Academy's Funding Agreement to direct the Academy to admit a child, and can seek advice from the Adjudicator in reaching a decision. The process for escalation where an academy refuses to admit a child under the FAP is as follows:

- LA must complete and send the appropriate Education Funding Agency form for consideration of a request to direct admission to the Academy with supporting evidence.
- The EFA will inform the Academy that it has received a request for a direction and will ask for any further evidence to be supplied within 7 calendar days.

All Academies are subject to their funding agreements, which say they must abide by the locally agreed FAP.

8. Review

The LA will request the sign up of schools every 3 years. In the event that the majority of schools can no longer support the principles and approach of the FAP, schools should initiate a review with the LA via SASH, SAPHTO or the Compact. The existing Protocol remains binding on all schools until the majority sign up to a revised version. The LA may make amendments if required to comply with any revision to the School Admissions Code or associated legislation.

9. Publication

The FAP will be published on the admissions page of the SCC website, and will form part of the in-year admission arrangements for all state funded schools in Somerset.

10. Contact

Queries regarding the operation of the Protocol should be directed to the Admissions and Entitlements Team or the appropriate Access Casework Officer.

Contact Details:

- Jane Seaman, Service Manager – Access, Admissions and Entitlements: 01823 355615
- Linsey Banks, Admissions and Entitlements Team Leader: 01823 356146
- Julie Wigley, Access Casework Officer, Mendip: 01458 258333