

'Every Child Flourishing'

THE GERRARDS CROSS CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

1 September 2020 - 31 August 2021

The Gerrards Cross Church of England School has a distinctive Christian ethos which is at the centre of school life. We provide an inclusive, supportive and caring environment, shaped by Christian values in which children can learn and flourish. We invite applications for admission without reference to the ability or aptitude of the child. We welcome applications from all families, irrespective of whether they are of the Christian faith, another faith or no faith. However, we expect parents to respect our Christian ethos and its importance to our school. The school enjoys close links with St James Church, Gerrards Cross.

Parents who wish their children to attend the school are welcome to visit. Arrangements can be made through the Admissions Secretary at the school.

The governors have made every effort to ensure that these arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code 2014 and all relevant legislation, including that on infant class sizes and equal opportunities.

Please note that throughout this document, the term "Parent" is used as defined in law (The Education Act 1996) as either:

- any person who has 'parental responsibility' (defined in the Children Act 1989) for the child or young person; or
- any person who has care of the child or young person.

If you are in any doubt, please contact the school for advice.

1. Over-subscription Criteria

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Need or with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming The Gerrards Cross CE School will always be offered places.

The school also participates in Buckinghamshire County Council's Fair Access Protocol. Children qualifying under the Fair Access Protocol may be offered a place even if there are no places available in the relevant year group and also take priority for admission over any child on the waiting list.

If there is then greater demand for admission than there are places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out in the following summary, and explained below:

1. Looked-after and previously looked-after children.
2. Children living in catchment, from families with exceptional social or medical needs.
3. Children living in catchment, with a Pupil Premium Grant.
4. Children living in catchment, with a sibling.
5. Children living in catchment, with no sibling.
6. Children living out of catchment, with a sibling.
7. Children living out of catchment, with no sibling, with a connection to a parish church.
8. Other children.

1.1 Definition of Over-subscription Criteria

1. Looked-after and previously looked-after children:

Looked-after children and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after, they became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or

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special guardianship order. By a “looked-after child” we mean one in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. An adoption order is one made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A ‘child arrangements order’ is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14). A ‘special guardianship order’ is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A). Applications under this criterion must be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order).

2. Children living in catchment, from families with exceptional social or medical needs:

Families with a normal home address in the catchment area (the Ecclesiastical Parish of St James, Gerrards Cross with St James, Fulmer - see map via link on website) who have exceptional medical or social needs that make it essential that the children attend The Gerrards Cross CE School rather than any other. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from the appropriate professional person involved with the family. When applying under this criterion, you must include supporting evidence from an independent professional person who is aware of the situation and supports your reasons for preferring The Gerrards Cross CE School. The supporting evidence must clearly demonstrate why the school is the most suitable and must illustrate the difficulties that would be caused if your child had to attend another school. The person supplying the evidence must be a doctor, health visitor, social worker, etc. who is aware of your child’s or your own circumstances. The school reserves the right to ask for further evidence or clarification where necessary and may seek the advice of appropriate education professionals where necessary in order to inform their final decision.

3. Children living in catchment, with a Pupil Premium Grant:

Children with a normal home address in the catchment area and who qualify for the Pupil Premium Grant. If you are in receipt of any of the following benefits, your child is eligible for Pupil Premium:

- Income support
- Income based Jobseeker’s allowance
- An income-related employment and support allowances
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income that does not exceed £16,190 as assessed by Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (Please note that this figure is for April 2017 and that it can change each year)
- The Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Universal Credit
- Working Tax Credit “run on” (the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working tax Credit).

Children who receive a qualifying benefit in their own right are also eligible to receive Pupil Premium.

Parents must provide evidence of the child's entitlement to the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG).

4. Children living in catchment, with a sibling:

Children with a normal home address in the catchment area and with a sibling on the roll of the school at the time of the application or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at the school and where, in either case, the sibling is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school. By sibling we mean 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 where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling. It is helpful if parents make it clear on the application form where the sibling has a different family name. Where

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there is more than one sibling at the school, only the youngest should be listed on the application form. The catchment area is clearly shown on the map under the admissions tab on our website.

5. Children living in catchment, with no sibling:

Children with a normal home address in the catchment area.

NB 'Normal home address' is defined in section 1.4

6. Children living out of catchment, with a sibling:

Children with a normal home address outside the catchment area and with a sibling on the roll of the school at the time of application or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at the school and where, in either case, the sibling is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school. By sibling we mean 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 where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling. It is helpful if parents make it clear on the application form where the sibling has a different family name. Where there is more than one sibling at the school, only the youngest should be listed on the application form.

7. Children living out of catchment, with no sibling, with a connection to a Parish Church:

Children whose parents express a preference for the school, supported by evidence that a parent has been, for the year immediately preceding the application, a regular worshipper (at least twice per month on average) at St James, Gerrards Cross, St James, Fulmer, Gerrards Cross Methodist Church, or St Andrew's United Reformed Church. The Governing Body asks the parent to complete a supplementary information form, at the end of this document and available from the school, confirming that s/he is a regular worshipper, and to pass the form to the priest, minister, etc. to confirm the statement made. Where a parent has not worshipped at a church for the minimum one year period, but has worshipped regularly at another church prior to that, the governors will take this into account provided supplementary information forms are completed for both churches.

Please note that church affiliation is only taken into consideration for children living outside the catchment who do not have a sibling at the school; if your child lives in the catchment area of the school, or has a sibling at the school, a supplementary form is not required.

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

8. Other children.

1.2 Multiple births

In cases where there is one place available and the next child on the list is a twin, triplet, etc., we would admit both twins (and all the children in the case of other multiple births) even if this meant exceeding the agreed admission number of 60 in Reception 2020-21 or the number of places (60) in other year groups.

1.3 Ranking of Children according to distance

Proximity of the child's home, as measured by the straight line distance between the home and the school, with those living nearer being accorded the higher priority, will serve to differentiate between children in criteria 1-9 should the need arise.

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The straight line distance will be measured by the Buckinghamshire County Council's Geographical Information System as described in the Buckinghamshire admissions booklet. In the event that two distance measurements are identical, the school will use random allocation to decide which child should be offered the place. The process will be conducted in the presence of a person independent of the school.

If parents are not sure whether or not they live in the Ecclesiastical Parish of St James, Gerrards Cross with St James, Fulmer, they can ask the school to check this and a written response will be provided.

1.4 Definition of 'Normal home address'

By **normal home address**, we mean the child's home address where the child sleeps for the majority of the school week (Monday – Friday). This must be where the parent or legal carer of the child lives with the child unless it is proved that the child is resident elsewhere with someone else who has legal care and control of the child. The address should be a residential property that is owned, leased or rented by the child's parent/s or person with legal care and control of the child.

1.4.1 Evidence of 'Normal home address'

We may ask for evidence of the normal home address in the form of a recent bill. This could be, for example:

- the most recent Council Tax bill,
- utility bill no more than three months old,
- a current TV licence,
- buildings and contents insurance,
- mortgage statement or rent book which shows the address concerned.

Parents who are unable to provide this evidence should contact the school to discuss what evidence might be acceptable. If it becomes clear that the parents and child are not living at the address given on the application form, or if there is any doubt, the school may seek further evidence.

1.4.2 Parents with Shared Responsibility

To avoid doubt, where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week or month, the address where the child lives will be determined having regard to a joint declaration from the parents stating the exact pattern of residence. If the residence is not split equally, then the relevant address used will be that at which we are satisfied that the child spends the majority of the school week. Where there is an equal split or there is any doubt about residence, we will make the judgment about which address to use for the purpose of determining whether or not to offer a place. We will take into account the following:

- any legal documentation confirming residence
- the pattern of the residence
- the period of time over which the current arrangement has been in place
- confirmation from any previous school of the contact details and home address supplied to it by the parents
- which parent is in receipt of child benefit
- where the child is registered with his/her GP
- any other evidence the parents may supply to verify the position.

1.4.3 Children not resident with a Parent

We may ask to see official documentation, such as a child benefit book or medical card if there are reasons why a child does not live at his or her parent's address. For example, if he or she is resident with a grandparent, this needs to be made clear on the application form. If such arrangements are not declared or a relative's address is used on the application, we may consider that a false declaration has been made, and withdraw the offer of a place. Childcare arrangements are **not** sufficient reason for

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listing another address, nor would we accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement.

1.4.4 Children who are moving home

If parents are moving, we will ask for evidence of the move, before using the new address for the application. Documentary evidence in the form of a solicitor's letter to confirm completion of contracts, or a rental agreement for at least a period of six months will be required (Armed Forces personnel are exempt).

If you are returning from elsewhere, to live in a home that you own, we will require evidence to show that you have returned before a place can be offered. We will also ask for evidence that any previous house owned has been sold or is being sold.

If you have purchased a property but have not yet moved in for example as a result of building work, your address will be taken to be the place where your child sleeps during the school week (see 1.4 above).

1.4.5 Second or Temporary homes

We would not accept an address where the one given is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary. We would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case we would require proof (see section 1.5.2).

1.5 Fraudulent or Misleading Information

The school works closely with the LA to ensure that places are not obtained at the school on the basis of false addresses, and, in cases of doubt, will take steps to verify the information provided. If a place at the school is offered, and it later becomes clear that the offer was made on fraudulent or misleading information (e.g. a false claim to living in the catchment area), and the school has denied a place to a child with a stronger claim, the school will withdraw the offer of a place. The offer can also be withdrawn even after the child has started at the school.

If parents move house after an application for a Reception Year place (September 2020) has been made, but before a place has been offered, the LA must be informed and the place may be withdrawn.

1.6 Appeals

There are established arrangements with the Oxford Diocese, independent of the school, for appeals against non-admission. Details are available from the school, including the date by which an appeal should be submitted. It should be noted that, in the event of an unsuccessful appeal against non-admission to the school, the school does not consider any further application in the same school year (1 September – 31 August), unless there has been a material change in circumstances, for example a change of address which results in a move from outside the catchment area to inside it.

2. Admission Arrangements to the Reception Year in September 2020

2.1 Overview

As an academy, the Governing Body is responsible for deciding on admissions, but works closely with Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) to co-ordinate admissions to all academies and maintained schools in Buckinghamshire. Details of BCC's co-ordination scheme, in which the school participates, are in the Buckinghamshire admissions booklet, available on-line from BCC or from the school in the

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autumn term 2019. The booklet explains the timetable for applications, how parents can express a preference for a school and give reasons for that preference, and how they will be informed of the result of their application. It also gives details of how applications received after the deadline, changes of preference, and waiting lists will be handled.

Parents wishing to apply for the Reception Year in September 2020 must complete the common application form provided by their home local authority (the home LA) which may not be Buckinghamshire. The home LA is the LA in which the parents live at the time of the application.

At our school, pupils are normally admitted at the beginning of the school year (1 September – 31 August) in which they reach their fifth birthday. We welcome all children, without reference to ability or aptitude, and irrespective of whether they are of the Christian faith, another faith or no faith.

2.2 Children eligible for Reception Year in September 2020

Parents whose children were born between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016 may apply for them to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2020. There are 60 places (the Published Admission Number) available. Our policy is not to offer admission in September 2020 to children who were born on or after 1 September 2016.

Parents of a child whose fifth birthday falls between 1 September 2020 and 31 March 2021 may defer entry until their child reaches compulsory school age (the term beginning in January or April after his or her fifth birthday). The school will hold the deferred place for the child (provided it is taken up during the school year 2020-21), although, in the majority of cases, we find that children benefit from starting at the beginning of the school year, rather than part way through it.

For children whose fifth birthday falls between 1 April 2021 and 31 August 2021 (summer-born children, who do not reach compulsory school age until September 2021), parents who do not wish them to start school in school year 2020-21, but to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2021, should proceed as follows. They should apply at the usual time for a place in September 2020 together with a written request that the child is admitted outside his or her normal age group to the Reception year in September 2021. NB parents would need to provide supporting reasons for seeking a place outside the normal age group and should discuss the position with the head teacher as early as possible. The school will consider the request carefully and, if it is agreed (this should be clear before the national offer day, 16 April 2020), their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before any place is offered. They should then reapply in the normal way (no later than 15 January 2021) for a Reception place in September 2021. If their request is refused, the parents must decide whether to wait for any offer of a place in September 2020 (NB it will still be subject to the over-subscription criteria below) or to withdraw their application and apply in the second half of the summer term 2021 for a Year 1 place in September 2021. Parents should be aware that the Year 1 group may have no vacancies as it is almost always full with children transferring from the 2020-21 Reception Year group.

Until the child reaches compulsory school age, s/he parents may attend part-time. If parents wish to exercise this right they should discuss detailed arrangements with the head teacher.

2.3 Application Process

Parents wishing to apply for the Reception Year in September 2020 must complete the common application form provided by their home local authority (the home LA). The home LA is the LA in whose area the parents live at the time of the application. The form must be returned to that LA no later than 15 January 2020. Applications received after this date will normally only be considered after all those received on or before the cut-off date. Any Supplementary Information Forms regarding Criteria 7 should be returned to school by 15 January 2020. Offers and refusals of places will be posted by the home LA on 16 April 2020.

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Key Dates:

- Supplementary Information Form submitted to School – 15 January 2020
- Application forms submitted to home LA - 15 January 2020
- Offers posted by home LA – 16 April 2020
- Dates of later admission rounds can be found on the Bucks County Council website (<https://www.buckscc.gov.uk>)

3. All Other Admissions from September 2020

3.1 Overview

Admission to the school during the school year 2020-21 depends on whether or not there are places available. All year groups at the school have 60 places. Applications must be made direct to the school on a form available from the school. Admissions outside the normal age group will be dealt with as indicated in section 3.3 below.

3.2 Offer Process

If there is a vacancy, and there is no child on the relevant waiting list with a higher priority (according to the over-subscription criteria 1–8 above), a place will be offered.

Please note that the only way that a place can be offered once the admission number of 60 is reached for any year group, except under the limited exceptional circumstances in the School Admissions Code 2014 or under the Buckinghamshire Fair Access Protocol (see below), is by appealing to an independent panel managed by the Oxford Diocese (see also note 1.6 above).

Places for September 2021 entry (other than Reception) may be offered from 1 July 2021, please note offers will be made based on the over-subscription criteria on the date of offer meeting on or after 1 July 2021. For other in-year admissions, the place must be taken up within two weeks of the offer date.

Please note that the school does not have a normal point of entry to Year 3 – applications for entry at the beginning of Year 3 are treated as indicated in this section.

3.3 Admission outside normal age group

Requests from parents for places outside a normal age group will be considered carefully e.g. for those who have missed education due to ill health. Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances. However, cases will not normally be agreed without a consensus that to do so would be in the pupil's interests. The governors will ask relevant professionals for their opinion on the case. Those refused places outside the normal age group will be informed of their statutory right to appeal.

3.4 Waiting Lists

The school maintains waiting lists for those children who are not offered a place, and whose parents ask for the child's name to be added to the waiting list. The order of priority on the waiting list is the same as the list of criteria for over-subscription, and does not depend on the date on which an application is received. No account is taken of length of time on a waiting list. The school periodically seeks confirmation that parents wish a child to be kept on the waiting list, and without positive confirmation, the children will be removed from the waiting list.

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4. Admissions in September 2019

The school received 181 applications expressing a preference for admission to the Reception Year in September 2019 by the closing date in January 2019. These were ranked as follows:

2		Children with Educational Health Care Plans naming the school
0	Criteria 1	Looked-after and previously looked-after children
0	Criteria 2	Children living in catchment, from families with exceptional social or medical needs
0	Criteria 3	Children living in catchment, with a Pupil Premium Grant
23	Criteria 4	Children living in catchment, with a sibling
48	Criteria 5	Children living in catchment, with no sibling
2	Criteria 6	Children living out of catchment, with a sibling
1	Criteria 7	Children living out of catchment, with no sibling, with a connection to a parish church
105	Criteria 8	Other children

60 places were offered, with the cut-off coming under criterion 5 at a distance of 1.03 miles.

Following further consideration in later rounds under the co-ordinated scheme, late applications and appeals, at the end of July 2019, 60 places had been accepted for the Reception Year.

5. Further information

Further information can be obtained from the Admissions Secretary at the school.

The Gerrards Cross CE School
Moreland Drive
Gerrards Cross
Bucks
SL9 8 BD

01753 882731

admissions@gerrardscross.bucks.sch.uk

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION FORM

NB: this form is only required where a parent is seeking admission for a child on the ground that the parent is a regular worshipper (at least twice per month on average over the past year - criteria 7 of the school's admission arrangements). After completion by the priest or minister, it should be returned to the school, not the Local Authority. In cases where attendance at a previous church is also to be considered, please fill in a separate form for each church.

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these admissions arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

For completion by the parent

Name of child:

Date of birth:

Name of parent/guardian:

Address of parent/guardian:
.....
.....
.....

Church attended:

I have attended the above church at least twice a month on average for the last year.

Signature of parent:

Date:

To the priest/minister

Please could you help the school to apply its admission policy by verifying the above information?

I am able/unable (please delete as appropriate) to verify the above statement.

Signed:

Name:

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Position*:

Date:

* For example, Vicar, Rector, Minister, etc.