

West Coker Primary School



Admissions Policy

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Approved by the Governing Body of West Coker Primary School in May 2021

Executive Headteacher.....

Chair of Governors.....

Proposed Date of Future Review May 2022

West Coker CE VC Primary School School Admission Arrangements

Part 1 - General information

1.1 These Admissions Arrangements

These admission arrangements have been made in accordance with the Sex Discrimination Act, The Race Relations Act, The Human Rights Act, The Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005 and the Equalities Act 2006. These arrangements will be administered fairly and impartially. The decisions to admit, or otherwise, are the responsibility of The Governing Body.

1.2 About our School

West Coker School is a Church of England (C of E) Voluntary Controlled school where the Christian ethos is central to the spiritual education of the children and the life of the school.

Our school is set in delightful surroundings in West Coker, on the edge of Yeovil. The school was built in the nineteenth century and now has four classes. We serve children aged from four to eleven years in mixed aged classes from Reception to Year Six.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers all its pupils.

Each child comes to school with a great deal to offer. Our school provides a variety of opportunities and activities to develop the full range of knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. This gives each individual child the best chance to fulfil their own potential and achieve their very best. They will have chances to investigate, discover, practise, experiment and enjoy the depth and wealth of experiences that learning provides. We enhance the breadth of children's learning with regular visits out of school or visitors coming in to work with the children.

Our children learn to value other people and to care for their environment. We have a school curriculum of 'Christian Citizenship' dedicated to enabling them to go forward and flourish, through Community projects, International awareness and outdoors education. We hope they remember and cherish the security and stimulation that has surrounded them in their primary school.

West Coker children learn empathy and tolerance for others. This gives them a good start as responsible and understanding adults of the future.

We have dedicated and able staff who, together with the governors, work hard to provide a happy and safe environment in which each child is encouraged to learn and develop to their full potential.

At the heart of our philosophy is a joy of learning which encompasses confidence and self-esteem. We believe that children who are happy and feel good about themselves will be able to make the most of all that is on offer at West Coker.

Our principal aim is to ensure that starting school is a happy experience. A smooth transition into full time education is particularly important for any child's well-being and future learning, and this calls for time and sensitive handling. At first, your child will have the flexibility to attend school on a part-time basis, gradually working up to

full time over a five week period, negotiated with the school depending on the individual, as necessary.

We liaise closely with the pre-schools in our area to ensure a smooth transition into school, incorporating Play-to-Learn sessions, during the summer term. It is the aim of the governors, as far as it is possible, to admit all children whose parents apply for them to come to the school, up to the Published Admission Number, which is currently 12, at the beginning of the academic year in which the children reach 5 years of age.

1.3 Contact details

West Coker CE VC Primary School
High Street
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Yeovil
Somerset
BA22 9AS

Tel: 01935 862568

E-Mail: westcoker@educ.somerset.gov.uk

Executive Headteacher: Mr Richard Culham

Website: <https://slp5.somerset.org.uk/webs/westcoker/SitePages/Home.aspx>

Local Authority (Somerset County Council) website: www.somerset.gov.uk

1.4 The Published Admission Number (PAN)

A statutory Published Admission Number applies for the Reception year group, which indicates the minimum number of places that will be offered if sufficient applications are received. The governors' Admissions Committee will consider all applications for Reception in accordance with these admission arrangements and places will be offered until the Published Admission Number is reached, at which point the governors will consider whether the resources available at the time will enable additional places to be made available. A recommendation would then be made to County to accept the application. If not, the decision will be to refuse all applications that would lead to admission of a pupil above the PAN.

The Published Admission Number currently applying for Reception is 12.

1.5 Relevant Documents: Please read this information before applying for a school place

Important documents published by every Local Authority will be relevant to some areas of school admissions procedure. Applicants are strongly advised to contact their 'home' Local Authority (the area in which your child lives) or access the Local Authority website and ensure that they read and understand this information before proceeding with an application for a school place. Documents of particular importance include:

- The Local Authority Coordinated Admissions Scheme
- The Composite Prospectus 'Primary Admissions Guide for Parents' (this will include detailed information about how to apply for a child to start school for the very first time in the Reception year group)
- The Local Authority School Transport policy
- Free School Meal Entitlement

The Local Authority Fair Access Protocol (this document applies only for applications made in connection with a place required during the academic year)

Part 2 - Over Subscription Criteria

2.1 Where there are more applications than there are places available within the requested year group, the governors will apply the following oversubscription criteria for every application received. This will rank applications according to priority and so identify those children for whom a place must be offered within the Published Admission Number applying to the Reception year group, or those who may be offered a place within the admission limit applying at the time for any other year group. Applications will be considered for refusal where a place within these limits cannot be provided.

2.2 Before applying the oversubscription criteria, a place will be allocated for any child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs that names West Coker C of E Primary School as the school the child must attend (The Special Educational Needs Code requires the Admission Authority to admit any children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs naming the school, before the consideration of any other applications).

The school will be required to admit any child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC) if the school is named, then;

1. Children Looked After– Children who are in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a residence/child arrangement order or special guardianship order.
(See important note 1)
2. Children without a statement of Special Educational Needs, 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 2)
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 3)
 - 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. For Infant school admissions only; 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. In VC schools with a religious foundation:
 - a) Children and/or parent(s) who are practising members of the founding religious body of the school (eg, Anglican or Methodist).
 - b) Children and/or parent(s) who are practising members of other churches or religious denominations. (see important note 4).
9.
 - a) Children of staff employed by the school for at least two years prior to the application closing date.
 - b) Children of staff recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. (See important note 6)
10. Children not satisfying a higher criterion

Important Notes

1. A looked after child is a child who is
 - (a) in the care of a local authority, or
 - (b) 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).
2. 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 (eg, 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.
3. '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.
4. "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 supplementary information form.
5. In the event of oversubscription within any of the over-subscription 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 independent drawing of lots
6. Criterion 9 - The Head Teacher or Governing Body of the relevant school will be asked to verify point b.

7 Criterion 4, 8 and 9 – Children considered under sub-criteria a) will have a priority over children considered under sub-criteria b).

2.3 Over Subscription Criteria

A 'looked after child or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order.

2.4 Applying a distance Measurement and Tie Breaker:

Where the Published Admission Number is reached part way through any criterion, a straight-line measurement between home and the school will be calculated for every child satisfying that criterion. The distance will be measured using a Geographic Information System method, to calculate on an electronic map, the distance 'between the front door of the child's permanent home and the front door of the school'. Places will be offered for those children living nearest to the school until all available places have been allocated.

Random allocation will be used as a tie-break to decide who has the highest priority for admission if the distance between two or more children's homes and the school are exactly the same. This process will involve the drawing of lots, which will be supervised by a person independent of the Admissions Authority.

Part 3 – Starting School in Reception in September

3.1 The procedure for applying to start school for the first time in Reception must be coordinated by the home local authority in conjunction with other local authorities and admission authorities as may be necessary. Before applying for a school place, applicants should refer to the Coordinated Admissions Scheme published by the Local Authority in which area the child subject to the application lives (the home Local Authority). Applicants may also consider referring to information contained in the Local Authority's 'Primary admissions guide for Parents', which should explain the application process in detail. These documents will be available on the home Local Authority's website or upon request to that Local Authority.

3.2 A suitable application form (referred to as 'the common application form' is available from the local authority in which area the child lives (the home local authority) which must be completed and submitted directly to this authority, to arrive no later than the given date in January.

3.3 The home Local Authority will forward applications directly to the Local Authority in which area the preferred school is located. The governors of West Coker C of E Primary School will be sent details of all application forms that indicate a preference for the school and these will be considered according to the information supplied by the applicant. Where necessary to do so, the committee will apply the oversubscription criteria in order to determine a priority for admission. Applications submitted before the January deadline will be administered and available places provisionally allocated, before the consideration of any later application.

3.4 The governors will notify Somerset Local Authority of their provisional application decisions in accordance with the timetable set out in this authority's published

Coordinated Admissions Scheme. Final decisions will be notified by letter post or email, to be sent out in April by the home Local Authority on behalf of the school.

Part 4 - Admission to any year group during the academic year (in-year admission)

4.1 Applications can be submitted at any time by completing the school's 'in-year application form' and returning this directly to the school office. The application form is available upon request from the school office.

4.2 The school will take admission decisions within five school days of receipt of application forms. Where the request is for the child's chronological age year group and there is a place available, the decision will normally be to admit the child concerned and applicants will be notified of this in writing.

4.3 Where the school has more than one application to consider at any one time for the same year group, it may need to apply the published oversubscription criteria in order to determine a priority for admission where insufficient places exist.

4.4 Where the requested year group is oversubscribed, the school will carefully consider whether an additional child might still be admitted to the school without impacting on the available resources or affecting the delivery of education. Normally the decision will be to refuse admission if the year group is full and, where this is the case, parents will be notified in writing of the reasons for refusal and about how to appeal against the decision.

4.5 In-year decision letters will be sent out from the School Office within 5 school days of the decision being taken. Applicants will be expected to confirm their acceptance of any place offered within 21 school days.

4.6 The school may refer some in-year admission applications in accordance with the Somerset Local Authority 'Fair Access Protocol' where the information provided by an applicant on the school place application form indicates that the child concerned may require additional support or an alternative school provision. Applicants are advised to read the Somerset Local Authority 'Fair Access Protocol' document before completing an in-year application form. This document can be downloaded and/or read on the Somerset County Council website.

Part 5 - Appeals Procedure

5.1 Parents have the legal right to appeal against the school's decision to refuse a place at West Coker C of E Primary School for a child in their care, providing a formal application for a school place has been submitted and a decision letter sent out on behalf of the Governing Body explaining the reasons for refusal. Full details explaining the appeal process will be enclosed with the decision letter.

5.2 The County Council website sets out the timeframe for the various stages in the appeal process and includes statutory dates by which appeals must be heard. The governors do not organise appeal hearings during school holidays and so any appeal forms received when the school is closed will not be administered until school resumes.

5.3 An appeal form can be obtained from the School Office.

Part 6 – Important Information

6.1 Waiting Lists

In accordance with statutory requirements, the school will hold a waiting list for the Reception year group until the end of the first term in the new school year. This will include the names of every child refused admission. The list will be maintained in ranked order according to the published oversubscription criteria and if a place becomes available within PAN, this will be offered for the highest ranked child at that time. Waiting lists are not held for any other year group.

Children who are the subject of a direction by a Local Authority to admit or who are allocated to the school in accordance with the In-Year Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those children on a waiting list.

6.2 Applications for children to enter a year group other than chronological age

The school will consider applications on a case by case basis for 'retained' or 'accelerated' entry in circumstances where parents would like their child to be admitted to a year group either side of the chronological age year group. Children must be of statutory school age when applications are made. The reasons for the request must be fully explained in writing and included with the school place application form.

A child admitted under these circumstances will be subject to an annual review in order to determine whether the retention or acceleration should continue or the child return to their chronological age group.

6.3 Multiple birth applications (for example twins)

In the case of multiple birth applications, the Published Admission Number or admission limit for any year group will be exceeded to ensure that multiple birth siblings can be allocated places at the same school (the sibling definition still applies).

6.4 Children from Overseas

The governors Admissions Committee will consider applications submitted on behalf of children from overseas in accordance with European Union Law, or Home Office rules for non-European Economic Area nationals. However, governors will not allocate a place to anyone moving into the country from abroad prior to their arrival in the county. Proof of actual residency will be required (see section 6.7 Home address). The only exceptions are children of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants (including Diplomats) returning to the local area. In these circumstances, an official letter declaring a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address will be acceptable.

6.5 Siblings

For the purpose of school admission, the definition of a sibling is 'a child living at the same address as a half or full brother or sister, an adoptive brother or sister, or children of the same household at the time of application and remaining so at the time of admission'.

6.6 Parent

A 'parent in education law includes natural parents, whether they are married or not and a person other than the natural parent(s) who has parental responsibility or care of a child or young person. Having 'care' of a child or young person means that person who looks after the child and with whom the child lives, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.

6.7 Home address

For the purposes of school admission, the governors' definition of a child's home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with the person(s) who legally have care of the child. Documentary evidence of house ownership or a minimum six-month rental agreement may be required, together with proof of the child's residence at the property concerned. Places will not be allocated on the basis of a future house move unless this can be confirmed through the exchange of contract or a signed formal lease agreement in place at the time of application. An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. The governors may withdraw the offer of a school place if the child's home address is subsequently found to be fraudulent.

6.8 Distance Measurements

For the purpose of measuring home to school distance, all calculations will be based on a straight-line measurement between the front door of the school and the front door of the child's permanent home, using a Geographical Information System (GIS) method. In the case of multilevel dwellings such as a block of flats, a distance will be calculated between the front door of the school and the main entrance to the building and this distance will apply equally for all applicants' children residing in this building. (Refer also to Section 2.4 of these arrangements)

6.9 Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs

Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs are admitted to school in accordance with a separate process administered by the Local Authority (LA) in whose area the child lives.

The governors must always admit a child whose Statement names West Coker C of E Primary School.

6.10 Withdrawing an allocated place

The governors will expect parents to confirm by post or email within 21 school days, their acceptance of any place offered at the school. The child must then be attending school within five weeks of the date of the original offer letter. The governors reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a place if these conditions are not met and to reallocate the place to the highest ranked child on the waiting list, or to a new

applicant where no waiting list exists. The governors may also withdraw the offer of a school place if the child's home address is subsequently found to be fraudulent.

6.11 Deferred Entry

Parents of children who have not yet reached the age of five may defer their child's entry to school. In these circumstances, parents can request that their child start school in the Reception year group at a later stage in the academic year. However, he/she must be in full-time education by the start of the term following his/her fifth birthday. Deferred entry children will join school in the year group and class appropriate to their chronological age, for example a child whose birthday falls in the summer term (1 April to 31 August) of the reception year and is deferred for the full Reception academic year will start school in Year 1. Any flexible start arrangements operated for children joining the school in September will also apply for deferred entry children.

Review date: May 2022