

# Peppard CE Primary School

Church Lane, Rotherfield Peppard  
Henley-on-Thames  
Oxon RG9 5JU  
Tel: 01491 628354  
Email: [office@peppardprimary.co.uk](mailto:office@peppardprimary.co.uk)  
Headteacher: Nick Steele



Creating a Love of Learning

## Admissions Policy for 2016/2017

This admissions policy meets all lawful requirements including those set out in the following Acts, Codes, policies and relevant case law:

- Children Act 1989
- School Standards & Framework Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- 2014 School Admissions Code
- Oxfordshire County Council's Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme

School Admissions Appeals will be conducted under arrangements set out in

- School Standards & Framework Act 1998
- 2012 School Admissions Appeals Code

### **Admission Number**

Published Admission Number for entry to Reception year group in 2016/17

15

## **Admission arrangements for entry to the Reception year group in the 2016/17 academic year**

Children born between 1 September 2011 and 31 August 2012 can start school during the 2016/17 academic year. Applications must be made by 15 January 2016. Applications made after this date will be considered to have been made late. Applications can be made online by using the link on Oxfordshire County Council's website

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/primaryadmissions](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/primaryadmissions) Notification will be sent by first-class post on 18 April 2016 for applications received by 15 January 2016. Online applicants will also receive notification by email.

Late applications received after 15 January 2016 but by 9 May 2016 will be treated as late applications. Notifications for late applications will be sent by first-class post on 13 June 2016.

Parents may wish to defer their child's entry to the school to a later date in the academic year, subject to the constraints shown in the table below. Before the child reaches statutory school age, parents can request a part-time place.

Children born between	Can Start School	Must Start School
1 September 2011 and 31 December 2011	September 2016 (part-time or full-time)*	January 2017 (full-time)
1 January 2012 and 31 March 2012	September 2016 (part-time or full-time)* or January 2017 (part-time or full-time)*	April 2017 (full-time)
1 April 2012 and 31 August 2012	September 2016 (part-time or full-time)* or January 2017 (part-time or full-time)* or April 2017 (part-time or full-time)*	September 2017 (full-time)  This is Year 1. However, if he/she does not start school by April 2017 <b>at the latest</b> , his/her place will be taken away and you must re-apply in June 2017 for a Year 1 place to start in September 2017.

\* Parents/carers can request full- or part-time provision in a school until their child reaches statutory school age

## **Admission arrangements for entry to other year groups during the 2016/17 academic year (in-year applications)**

Applications for entry to other year groups at the school (Years 1 to 6) to start during the 2016/17 academic year, can be made at any time. Applications for entry to other year groups in September 2016 can be made no earlier than 6 June 2016 at the earliest.

Between 9 June 2016 and 14 July 2016, 5pm on each Thursday will be treated as a "closing date" for in-year applications for that week. Applications received by each "closing date" will

be considered during the following 10 school days. In most cases the admissions authority would aim to respond to applications by the Thursday, 10 school days after the “closing date”.

Applications received after 14 July 2016 will be considered to have been made after the end of the academic year when schools are closed for the summer vacation. Where schools need to be consulted about whether a place can be offered, it is highly likely that it will not be possible to respond to an application until schools re-open in September.

From September 2016, 5pm on each Thursday during term-time is treated as a “closing date” for in-year applications for that week. Applications received by each “closing date” will be considered during the following 10 school days. In most cases the admissions authority would aim to respond to applications by the Thursday, 10 school days after the “closing date”.

The last date for which an application for entry during the 2016/17 academic year can be accepted will be 22 June 2017.

It is possible to apply in advance of an intended start date. However, in-year applications can be made no more than one term in advance of the requested entry as shown in the table below:

Place wanted	Earliest application date	We aim to write by
Late Autumn Term – 31 October 2016	1 September 2016	15 September 2016
Early Spring Term – 3 January 2017	31 October 2016	17 November 2016
Late Spring Term – 20 February 2017	3 January 2017	19 January 2017
Early Summer Term – 24 April 2017	20 February 2017	16 March 2017
Late Summer Term – 5 June 2017	24 April 2017	18 May 2017

Usually, places will be offered if there are places available in the year group (the number of children in the year group is less than the published Admission Number for the school). Where the Admission Number has changed since the particular year group, for which the application has been made, joined the school, the previous Admission Number will be used. Sometimes, it will not be possible to offer places even though there are fewer children in the year group than the Admission Number because the school has had to organise in such a way that the admission of a further pupil would cause prejudice to the efficient education of the children already there or, for children in the Reception year group, Year 1 or Year 2, would breach the class-size limit of 30 children per one qualified teacher required in law and require the school to take a “relevant measure”.

If a place is available in the appropriate year group and there are less applications for places than places available, all applicants will be offered a place.

If there are no places available in the appropriate year group, no applicants will be offered a place.

If a place is available in the appropriate year group but there are more applications for places than places available, the over-subscription criteria (below) will be applied and those child(ren) with the highest priority under the rules will be offered place(s).

When a place is offered, a child is expected to start as soon as possible, unless the place has been offered during the previous term for a start at the beginning of the following term. In this latter case, the child is expected to start no later than the beginning of the term requested.

### **Appeals**

If a place cannot be offered, parents have a statutory right to appeal against the decision. More information about the appeals process and arrangements will be sent out with the response letter.

### **Admission to an older or younger age group**

Parents of gifted and talented children, or those who have experienced problems or missed part of a year, for example due to ill health, can seek places outside their normal age group. Any decision will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case. This will include:

- taking account of the parent's views; and
- any information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; and
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and
- the views of the head teacher of the school(s) concerned.

When informing a parent of the decision on the year group to which their child should be admitted, the Admission Authority will give clear reasons for the decision. Where it has been agreed that a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school) the application will be:

- processed as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible; and
- considered against the determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable.

The LA will not give a lower priority on the basis that the child is not of the correct age.

Parents' statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied will not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

### **Fair Access Protocol**

The Fair Access Protocol is part of the admission arrangements of all maintained schools in Oxfordshire.

**Multiple Applications (Applicants unable to agree on the schools to be listed on the application)**

If parents cannot agree on the schools to list on the application and submit separate applications, the Admissions Authority will only consider the application made by the parent who receives Child Benefit for that child.

If a parent is unhappy with this decision their only recourse would be to seek an order from the Court.

**School transport**

Some children qualify for free transport from home to school. Oxfordshire County Council's home to school transport policy in effect from 1 September 2015 is shown below.

## **Over-subscription Criteria**

If the school is oversubscribed (there are more applications than places available) the following rules will be applied in descending order of priority:

In accordance with legal requirements, children who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health & Care Plan<sup>1</sup> naming the school will always be admitted.

1. Children who are “looked after”<sup>2</sup> by a Local Authority (LA) within the meaning of Section 22 of the [Children Act 1989](#) at the time of their application, and “previously looked after” children<sup>3</sup>. The term “previously looked after” refers only to children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order<sup>4</sup> or special guardianship order<sup>5</sup>).
2. Disabled children who need to be admitted to a school on the grounds of physical accessibility. The definition of disability is that contained within the [Equality Act 2010](#).
3.
  - a. Children [living](#) in the designated area of the school with a [brother or sister](#) on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry. If there are more applicants than places, priority will be given to those children who live closest to the school using the [shortest designated public route](#) as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families’ Geographic Information System.
  - b. Children [living](#) in the designated area of the school. If there are more applicants than places, priority will be given to those children who live closest to the school using the [shortest designated public route](#) as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families’ Geographic Information System.
4. Children [living](#) outside the designated (catchment) area who will have a [brother or sister](#) on roll at the time of application who will still be attending at the time of entry. If there are more applicants than places, priority will be given to children who live closest to the school by the [shortest designated public route](#) as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families’ Geographic Information System.
5. Those children who [live](#) closest to the school by the [shortest designated public route](#) as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families’ Geographic Information System.

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<sup>1</sup> A Statement of Special Educational Need is a statement made by the local authority under Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 specifying the special educational provision required for that child. An Education, Health and Care plan is a plan made by the local authority under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education provision required for that child. ***This is therefore not an oversubscription criterion.***

<sup>2</sup> A 'looked after child' is a child who is either (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) at the time of making an application to a school.

<sup>3</sup> This group includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).

<sup>4</sup> Under the provisions of Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amend section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders.

<sup>5</sup> Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a ‘special guardianship order’ as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian (or special guardians).

### **“Looked After” children**

A 'looked after child' is a child who is either

- (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) at the time of making an application to a school.

### **Previously “Looked After” children**

The School Admissions Code 2012 introduced a requirement for all admission authorities to broaden the existing priority for 'looked after' children or children in care (defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989) to also include 'previously looked after' children. Children who were 'previously looked after' were defined for admissions purposes as those who, immediately after being in care, became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order.

A revised School Admissions Code came into force on 19 December 2014 and this states that 'previously looked after' children include those who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 - Adoption Orders) and not simply those children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 - Adoption Orders). In addition, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders. Those who previously received a residence order are now deemed to have a child arrangement order.

If applying on behalf of a “previously looked after” child the parent will need to provide the following evidence:

- an Adoption Order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002; or
- an Adoption Order under the Adoption Act 1976; or
- a Child Arrangements Order; or
- a Residence Order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989; or
- a Special Guardianship Order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s), under section 14A of the Children Act 1989.

### **Brothers and sisters (siblings)**

For admissions purposes, a brother or sister is defined as one of the following:

- A brother or sister (both parents the same) [living at the same home address](#); or
- A half- brother or half-sister (one parent the same) [living at the same home address](#); or
- A step-brother or step-sister (sharing a parent who is married or in a civil partnership) [living at the same home address](#); or
- An adopted child who, by reason of the adoption, now shares one or more parents with a child [living at the same home address](#).

### **Time of Entry (siblings)**

The admission rules give some priority to those with a brother or sister attending the relevant school at the applicant's "time of entry". This means that, in the normal admissions round, there will be no sibling connection for admission purposes for the following:

- applicants for entry to Reception year group if they have a brother or sister in Year 6

### **Twins and Children from Multiple Births**

Where the parent has made the same preferences of school and, through the normal operation of the admission arrangements, the last available place at a school has been allocated to one twin, or child from a multiple birth, the other twin, or the other children from the multiple birth, will be offered a place at that school. This means that, in these circumstances, the Published Admission Number would be exceeded.

### **Measuring distances from home to school**

For all schools where the Local Authority (LA) is the Admissions Authority (AA) for the school and any schools where the Admissions Authority (the Governing Body) has a policy to use the LA's measuring system, the route from home to school has been measured using the "**shortest designated route**" since September 2005 \*.

The start point of a measurement is the "**seed point**" of the home address. The "seed point" is provided by Ordnance Survey from information compiled from Royal Mail and/or district or city councils. The seed point normally falls within the bounds of a property. The accuracy of seed points is to the nearest ten centimetres. It is possible to move the location of an individual seed point, but this is not necessary for most addresses. It is not possible to verify the individual location of every seed point prior to measuring due to the number of addresses in Oxfordshire and surrounding areas.

From the seed point the route firstly connects to the nearest point of the digitised network. The digitised network is constructed from road data supplied by Ordnance Survey called the Integrated Transport Network (ITN). The Integrated Transport Network has been accurately digitised to measure along the centre of roads and takes corners at right angles. This is the

same underlying information as used by internet-based mapping solutions (e.g. Google Maps). However, the LA has a more accurate start point than internet-based mapping solutions and the ITN has been augmented by the LA to take into account other available public routes (e.g. alleyways, public footpaths, bridleways, etc). Ordnance Survey assures that the augmented ITN used by the LA is accurate to at least 1 metre. All 548,000 kilometres of roads in Great Britain are accurately mapped in a consistent and logical network. The network does not include routes that are not defined as public; these include crossing parks with no paths where the park is not open and available all the time, “short-cuts” across patches of open land without paths, or footpaths across private land which are not defined by Ordnance Survey as public routes.

The end point of the “shortest designated route” is the **nearest open gate** of the school first arrived at from the direction of travel from the seed point officially available for use by students for entry and exit to the school site at the start and end of the school day. The location of these gates has been set by the LA. The LA consults with each individual school annually to ensure accurate placement of the gate and its availability for use.

The shortest designated route is established using an algorithm within the bespoke software used by the LA. This software is called RouteFinder and is produced by Higher Mapping Solutions ([www.highermappingsolutions.com](http://www.highermappingsolutions.com)). This programme integrates with the LA’s database (ONE) which is supplied by Capita Children’s Services ([www.capita-cs.co.uk](http://www.capita-cs.co.uk)).

RouteFinder measures in kilometres and the measurement is converted into miles accurate to three decimal places, which gives an accuracy up to 1.609344 metres.

The “shortest designated route” is not necessarily a driving route because it may use in whole or in part a non-driveable route (e.g. footpaths). The “shortest designated route” is also not necessarily a walking route for example, where roads are used, the measurement is along the centre of the road not along the edge (pavement or equivalent) of the road. Other measuring systems may give a different measurement but the LA cannot take a measurement from another measuring system into account because this would constitute mal-administration of the admissions process by the Admissions Authority for the school.

For addresses which are outside the digitised network (approximately 6 miles outside Oxfordshire’s county boundary) an internet mapping solution will be used. For addresses in Europe, we use [maps.google.co.uk](http://maps.google.co.uk) For addresses outside Europe we measure a straight line distance using longitude and latitude. Firstly, we derive a start point (the home address) using [itouchmap.com/latlong.html](http://itouchmap.com/latlong.html) We then measure the straight line distance in statute miles from this start point to the end point (the school gate) using [www.nhc.noaa.gov/gccalc.shtml](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/gccalc.shtml)

\* A small number of ‘Own Admission Authority’ schools measure using a straight-line distance from home to school. The LA also calculates these distances for those particular schools.

## Terms used in this explanation

“shortest designated route”      The shortest distance between two points calculated using a computer programme as defined in this explanatory document

Geographic Information      A system designed to capture, store, manipulate,

System (GIS)	analyse, manage and present all types of geographic data. The Admissions Team of Oxfordshire County Council uses MapInfo (supplied by Pitney Bowes Software) for its GIS needs
Local Authority (LA)	Oxfordshire County Council
Admissions Authority (AA)	The authority that has responsibility for admissions decisions  For Community and Voluntary Controlled schools the AA is Oxfordshire County Council  For all other schools and academies the AA is the Governing Body, a sub-group of the Governing Body or a group given authority to make admissions decisions by the Governing Body.  The AA is never an individual person
Ordnance Survey	The national mapping agency for Great Britain, an executive agency and non-ministerial government department of the UK Government
“seed point”	A geographically defined spatial point set by Royal Mail and/or district or city councils, and supplied to Ordnance Survey which then sells that data to other organisations (e.g. Oxfordshire County Council). The seed point used by the Admissions Team of Oxfordshire County Council is the “all numeric British Co-ordinate System” (easting and northing)
easting	a measurement in metres east of the south-west corner of the SV square of the Ordnance Survey mapping grid (this square is in the far south-west of the British Isles and includes the Scilly Isles). Oxfordshire County Council uses a six-digit integer and a single decimal place (accuracy to 10 centimetres)
northing	a measurement in metres north of the south-west corner of the SV square of the Ordnance Survey mapping grid (this square is in the far south-west of the British Isles and includes the Scilly Isles). Oxfordshire County Council uses a six-digit integer and a single decimal place (accuracy to 10 centimetres)
digitised network	the geographic database of all possible, available, measurable routes. The digitised network is based on the Integrated Transport Network (ITN) produced by Ordnance Survey augmented to include additional non-driveable public routes
“nearest open gate”	the first gate arrived at from the direction of travel which is available for use by students for entry and exit to the school site at the start and end of the school day
algorithm	a series of programmed instructions carried out by the RouteFinder software which calculates all available routes between the start and end points and outputs the shortest
RouteFinder	GIS-based software produced by Higher Mapping Solutions ( <a href="http://www.highermappingsolutions.com">www.highermappingsolutions.com</a> ) which is designed to find the shortest measurement between two defined points using the available network.

ONE database

Database created by Capita Children's Services ([www.capita-cs.co.uk](http://www.capita-cs.co.uk)) used by Oxfordshire County Council to hold information about children and their applications for school places

### **Random Allocation**

If the distance "tie break" produces an identical result for two or more applicants and these applicants live at different addresses and are not children of a multiple birth (see above), the Admission Authority will use random allocation to determine who will be offered a place.

## Home address

The address on the application **should be the child's address at the time of application**. This is the address at which the child spends the majority of term-time school nights (Sunday night to Thursday night).

## Changes of Address

Changes of address which occur after 15 January 2016 can be taken into account if proof of this change is provided no later than 5 February 2016 (see below). To confirm your new address we need one of the following:

- A solicitor's letter advising contracts have been exchanged (**if the property is being purchased**); *or*
- A copy of a tenancy agreement (if the property is to be rented). **If this tenancy agreement comes to an end before September 2016 we may not accept the address for admissions purposes**; *or*
- A copy of your Council Tax Bill **showing the same name(s) as in Section 5 of the CAF**.
- **Letter from a new employer** (e.g. University college) where accommodation is being provided by them and is tied to the new post/job giving details of this new address; *or*
- **New Quarter Information** if this is a military posting with provided accommodation; *or*
- **Assignment Order** if this is a military posting but new quarter has not yet been notified.

We may also ask for proof from HM Revenue & Customs, Child Benefit Division or Tax Credits Division. **Such correspondence must pre-date the application you have made.**

## Multiple Addresses

Where children spend time with parents at more than one address then the address given on the form should be the one that they live at (i.e. sleep at) for the majority of term-time school nights (Sunday night to Thursday night).

If children spend time equally at different addresses then the address we will use for admissions purposes will be the one registered for child benefit. We will request proof of the registered address, which must pre-date the application.

## Fraudulent Applications

If a place has been obtained on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application (for example, a false claim to residence in a designated/ catchment area) and this results in the denial of a place to a child with a stronger claim, the admission authority for the school may withdraw the offer of the place. This follows the guidance in paragraphs 2.12 and 2.13 of the School Admissions Code (December 2014) published by the Department for Education:

[2.12] An admission authority **must not** withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application. Where the parent has not responded to the offer, the admission authority **must** give the parent a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not. Where an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, the application **must** be considered afresh, and a right of appeal offered if an offer is refused.

[2.13] A school **must not** withdraw a place once a child has started at the school, except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In deciding whether to withdraw the place, the length of time that the child has been at the school **must** be taken into account. For example, it might be considered appropriate to withdraw the place if the child has been at the school for less than one term.

## **Continued Interest lists**

Oxfordshire County Council does not hold waiting lists for entry to schools. In Oxfordshire, lists for children who cannot be offered a place at a school but where parents want them to continue to be considered, should a place become available, are called “Continued Interest” (CI) lists. A Continued Interest list is made up of children who have not been and cannot be offered a place at a school. These children are listed in order of the Published Admissions Rules for that school (not in order of how long they have been on the list).

You can add your child’s name to the Continued Interest list for a maximum of three schools where your child has already been considered but cannot be offered a place.

You cannot add your child’s name to a Continued Interest list for a school at which you have not yet requested a place. In this case this is called a “change of preference” (see below), and the Admissions Authority (AA) will firstly need to consider whether a place can be offered or not. If a place cannot be offered you will then be able to add your child’s name to the Continued Interest list for that school subject to the maximum limit of three schools.

**The School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Code of Practice on School Admissions and Oxfordshire County Council’s Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme clearly state that the Local Authority (LA) must offer a place at the highest preference listed where it is possible to offer a place according to the Published Admissions Rules. If you add your child’s name to the Continued Interest list for a school which could not be offered, you are stating that you want this school more than (and instead of) the school offered if it is possible to make an offer at a later date.**

Your child cannot be added to the Continued Interest list of a school which is lower on your list than the school they were offered. However, you can change the order of your preferences (see below), so that a new decision can be made whether a place can be offered at that school. After you have been notified of the decision, if a place could not be offered then it will be possible to add your child’s name to the Continued Interest list.

*For example, your child cannot be added to the “Continued Interest” list for a school which you listed as third preference if they have been offered a place at the school which you listed as second preference.*

*In this example, if you wanted your child to be considered for a place at the school originally requested as third preference, then this preference would need to be moved up your list to become second preference and the place offered at the school originally requested as second preference would need to be moved down your list to become third preference. The new second preference would need to then be considered as a change of preference (see below).*

If a place becomes available at a school and your child is at the top of the Continued Interest list for that school, the AA will automatically offer a place at that school where possible. However, late applications and changes of preference will be considered alongside, and not after, the Continued Interest list if any places become available at a school that can be reallocated. It is therefore possible during the late allocation round for a place to be allocated to a late application or change of preference rather than the child at the top of the Continued Interest list, depending on where the applicants fit in with the published admissions criteria for the school in question.

In cases where the child at the top of the Continued Interest list is eligible to be given a place that has become available at a preferred school, the AA will automatically allocate a place at that school. The place at the school previously offered will be taken away so that it can be offered to another child. Your child cannot simultaneously hold the offer of a place at more than one school.

*For example, a child's name has been added to the "Continued Interest" lists for the schools which they wanted as first and second preferences but has been offered a place at the school they listed as third preference. A place becomes available at their first preference school and is offered. The place at their third preference school is taken away and offered to another child. They are also automatically removed from the Continued Interest list for their second preference school because this school is now lower down on their application than the school they have been offered.*

Eligibility for free home to school transport is assessed based on the Home to School Transport Policy. If a child was offered free transport to a school they were originally offered and is later offered a place at a school from the Continued Interest list, they will not automatically continue to qualify for free home to school transport to the new school. This will be assessed separately and offered if they qualify for transport under the Home to School Transport Policy.

Lists will be maintained until 30 June 2017.

# OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Home to School Transport Policy

2015/16

### Introduction

1. The County Council is keen to encourage young people to walk or cycle to school or college or to make use of public transport, but it also provides free transport and some assisted transport as set out in the Home to School Transport Policy set out in this document.
2. The legal basis for the provision of home to school transport is set out in sections 508A, 508B, 508C, 508D and 509AD and Schedule 35B of the Education Act 1996 (as amended by Part 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006) and where appropriate the Equality Act and English and European case law. In addition local authorities are under a statutory duty to have regard to the Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance issued by the DfE in July 2014 and the Post16 Transport to Education and Training guidance issued in February 2014.
3. The Home to School Transport Policy applies to young people who live in the administrative County of Oxfordshire. Those who are not resident in Oxfordshire are advised to contact their own home local authority for details of any policy that their home authority may have regarding home to school/college transport.
4. Parents of those aged from 4 (Rising Five's) to 16 need to complete and submit a Transport Application Form if they wish to apply for free or subsidised home to school transport. If they wish to apply for subsidised travel an 'Application for Concessionary Travel on a School Bus' needs to be completed.
5. When, under the Home to School Transport Policy, children and young people are entitled to free transport it is provided by the most cost effective means. This will usually be by the provision of a free bus pass. However, where numbers are small children sometimes have to be transported by taxi. Where parents wish to take their children to school and it is therefore possible to avoid the provision of a taxi the Local Authority may agree to the payment of a mileage allowance. The mileage allowance is provided for the child's journey to school and the return to the child's home. Parents are not provided with a mileage allowance for their own return to home in the morning or their journey to the school in the afternoon, i.e. the LA pays a mileage allowance for two journeys per day rather than four. The mileage allowance is the former Revenue and Customs All Car Rate of 40p per mile. If through a change in circumstance<sup>1</sup> the payment of the mileage allowance proves no longer to be the cheapest way of transporting the child to school the alternative means of travel will be offered and the parent will be given up to 6 weeks to consider the new arrangement. At the end of that period or when the alternative means of transport is taken up, whichever is the sooner, the mileage allowance will be withdrawn.

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<sup>1</sup> For example if a taxi contract is awarded to transport another nearby child to the same school and there is a spare seat in the vehicle.

6. Where free or concessionary travel has been agreed it is provided for attendance at the beginning and end of the school day and not for extracurricular activities.
7. The responsibility for determining entitlement issues rests with the School Admissions Team since transport decisions relate to the school attended. The responsibility for organising transport rests with the Customer Service Centre and the Environment and Economy Department.
8. Any information regarding Oxfordshire's Home to School Transport Policy obtained from any source other than the Admissions Team of Oxfordshire County Council or the Oxfordshire public website should be disregarded.
9. Buses and coaches used for home to school transport are public service vehicles and are subject to specific safety legislation. This is enforced by an initial inspection and certification of the vehicle followed by subsequent annual checks. Vehicles are also subject to random roadside checks undertaken by the 'Vehicle and Operator Service Agency' (VOSA). VOSA are able to prohibit any vehicle that is non-compliant, i.e. is in a dangerous condition, not roadworthy and/or the driver's hours are irregular. Any Service Provider using sub-standard vehicles may lose their operator's licence.

### **Statutory Walking Distance**

10. In understanding home to school transport and what can and cannot be provided free of charge it is important to understand what is referred to as "the statutory walking distance". This is 2 miles for children who are under 8 years of age, and 3 miles for those of statutory school age who are 8 and over. It is measured along the shortest route along which a child, accompanied by a responsible adult, may walk with reasonable safety. The route may include footpaths, bridleways, and other pathways, as well as recognised roads. All such routes need to be open to the public. When there are issues raised over the possible safety of a walking route the Admissions Team will arrange for an initial assessment and, if necessary, a full risk assessment by Road Safety.

### **Distance Measurement for Free Transport for Children of Low Income Families**

11. The 2 mile limit is measured in the same way as the "statutory walking distance". However, the 6 mile and 15 mile upper limits are not walking routes. They are measured along routes that are passable using a road route suitable for motorised vehicles.

### **Home**

12. A child's home is considered to be the child's main place of residence during the normal school week. Free transport can only be provided from that one address.

### **Travel to a Friend's Home**

13. No seat can be provided on an ad hoc basis to children wishing to travel to the homes of children who are entitled to free transport.

## **Escorts**

14. Escorts are normally only provided when it has been established through the assessment or review process that a child with a Statement of Special Educational Need or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan s has a specific need to be accompanied.
15. Escorts will not normally be provided in any other circumstances.

## **Parents accompanying children in OCC transport**

16. Parents will not normally be able to travel in OCC provided transport.

## **Assessment of Eligibility for Free Transport on Admission to Primary or Secondary School**

17. An assessment of eligibility for free transport is made as part of the normal admissions process for entry to school. Parents are normally notified of the decision in the letter offering a school place.
18. If a child ceases to be eligible during the course of the school term, for example due to moving address, the provision should cease at the end of that term.

## **The Children and Families Act 2014**

19. The Children and Families Act received the Royal Assent in March 2014 and involves the replacement of Statements of Special Educational Need with Education, Health and Care Plans.
20. Parents of children with Education, Health and Care Plans will in certain circumstances have the option of a personal budget to meet some or all of the provision detailed in the plan and special transport will be an element of the personal budget. The Home to School Transport Policy will be amended shortly to reflect this change in the law.

## **Free transport for those of school age (Reception to Year 11)**

21. Children within the following categories are eligible for free transport:
  - a. Children attending the nearest available school or educational placement to their address, if the distance from home to school is over the “statutory walking distance” of 3 miles if aged 8 or over or 2 miles if less than aged 8 and of school age. This applies whether or not the school was listed on the Common Admissions Form (CAF).
  - b. Children attending the nearest available school in Oxfordshire, if the distance from home to school is over the “statutory walking distance” of 3 miles if aged 8 or over or 2 miles if less than aged 8 and of school age. This applies whether or not the school was listed on the Common Admissions Form (CAF).
  - c. Where at least 20% of addresses are nearest to the catchment school and the rest are nearest to another school free transport will be provided to the catchment school for all addresses if the distance is beyond the statutory walking

distance or there is no safe walking route. This is referred to as the 'split village' entitlement (please see Appendix 1).

- d. Children who are aged 8 or over and are under 11 years old who are eligible for Free School Meals or whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit and attend the nearest school if it is over 2 miles from their home.
- e. Children aged 11 to 16 who are eligible for Free School Meals or whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit and who attend one of their three nearest suitable schools (or places other than school at which they might receive education under section 19(1) of the Education Act 1996), where they live more than two but not more than 6 miles from that school. The 2 mile distance is measured by “walking route” and the 6 mile distance is measured by road route.
- f. Children attending the nearest available school to their address even if it is less than the statutory walking distance, if it would not be safe for a child accompanied by an adult to walk from the home to the school. This applies whether or not the school was listed on the CAF. If the route is subsequently determined to be safe the free transport will be withdrawn after the parent will be given up to 6 weeks to consider the new arrangement. At the end of that period or when the alternative means of transport is taken up, whichever is the sooner, the mileage allowance will be withdrawn.
- g. Children aged 11 to 16 who are eligible for Free School Meals or whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit and want their child to be educated in accordance with their religion or belief and they attend the nearest suitable school preferred on grounds of religion or belief that is over 2 miles but no more than 15 miles from their home. The 2-mile distance is measured by “walking route” and the 15-mile distance is measured by road route.
- h. Children entitled to free transport that move house during Year 11 and continue to attend their original school subject to the following limits:
  - i. Transport can be provided other than by taxi
  - ii. The distance travelled is no more than 15 milesTaxis will only be used in exceptional circumstances.
- g. Children with a disability who do not have a Statement of Special Educational Need or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan who by reason of their disability are unable to walk even relatively short distances to school and children with a mobility problem caused by a temporary medical condition, for example a broken leg. This assistance is subject to confirmation of the medical reasons for the provision by a GP or consultant.
- h. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Need or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan where one of the following applies:
  - (i) The school attended is the nearest suitable school or educational

placement to their address that has an available place, if the distance from home to school is over the “statutory walking distance” of 3 miles if aged 8 or over or 2 miles if less than aged 8 and of school age.

- (ii) The school attended is the nearest suitable school or educational placement to their address that has an available place and the distance from home to school is less than the distances set out in h(i) but it would not be safe for a child accompanied by an adult to walk from the child’s home to the school.
- (iii) The children concerned are unable to walk to school by reason of their special educational need or, if disabled, their disability or because of a temporary or long term medical condition. Evidence is required from a GP or consultant.

### **Free Travel to Out County Residential Schools for those with a Statement of Special Educational Need or an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan**

#### Out County Weekly Boarding

- 22. The beginning and end of each term of each school week to a total of 76 single journeys per year.

#### Termly Boarding (3 terms per year)

- 23. Children of 11 or over are entitled to free travel at the beginning and end of each term and half term up to a maximum of 16 single journeys per year.
- 24. Children aged up to 11 are entitled to free travel at the beginning and end of each term and half term, plus 4 discretionary journeys home per year, up to a maximum of 24 single journeys per year.

#### Termly Boarding (4 terms per year)

- 25. Children of 11 or over are entitled to free travel at the beginning and end of each term and half term up to a maximum of 16 single journeys per year.
- 26. Children aged up to 11 are entitled to free travel at the beginning and end of each term and half term, plus 4 discretionary journeys home per year, up to a maximum of 24 single journeys per year.

#### Out County 52 Week Boarding (joint placement with other agency)

- 27. All boarders (or parents) are entitled to 12 single trips home per year (broadly relating to term times). Any additional trips will be the responsibility of the other agency.

#### Payment of parental journeys for those with children at out county residential special schools

- 28. Payment will be made if one of the following applies:
  - a. Attendance at their child's annual review

- b. Attendance at any meeting called by the LA at the pupil's school
- c. Journeys necessitated by a child's sickness or emergency medical appointments
- d. An agreed journey to visit a new school placement
- e. To attend up to three additional meetings per year at the school (called by the school or requested by the parents) if sanctioned by the LA in advance.

#### Overnight Accommodation

29. The LA will not normally reimburse the cost of overnight accommodation for parents/carers.

#### **Applications for Transport Assistance on Grounds of Religion and Belief**

30. In making decisions on assistance with transport the LA will respect parents' religious and philosophical convictions as to the education to be provided for their children in so far as this is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure.
31. However, a parent will need to satisfy the LA of the genuine nature of the religious and/or philosophical belief and that the application is made in good faith. The burden of proof lies with the child's parent/parents.
32. Examples of acceptable evidence are:
- a. The provision of a baptismal certificate.
  - b. A statement of atheism.
  - c. A statement of adherence to a particular faith.
  - d. A letter of support from a priest or rabbi stating that the child belongs to a particular congregation.

Normally two pieces of evidence will be required.

33. It is important to note that the LA will take into account the financial consequences of any applications for assistance and that setting up new coach services or taxi routes or specifically continuing them when they could be discontinued in order to accommodate new travellers would normally fall within the definition of "unreasonable public expenditure". However, where there are spare seats on already existing home to school transport routes, or scheduled public transport services, the LA will be able to consider applications for places under the concessionary travel arrangements.
34. The LA will not take into account academic grounds for preferring a particular school when making a decision on whether to provide assisted transport on grounds of faith or belief.
35. Decisions on applications for transport assistance on grounds of faith or belief will normally be taken by a panel of three. The chairman will normally be the Admissions and Transport Services Manager.

## **16-19 Home to School/College Transport**

### Annual Post16 Transport Policy Statement

36. Oxfordshire's Post16 Transport Policy Statement is published by 31 May of each year and contains details of travel provision for this age group. This is intended to ensure that young people can make informed choices regarding Post16 education. The Transport Policy Statement can be amended in year in response to complaints or a direction from the Secretary of State. Complaints can be heard by the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee.

### Free Travel

37. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are beyond statutory school age and who are aged 16 to 19, will receive free travel to that placement when they attends the nearest suitable school or educational placement to their home address that has an available place and one of the following applies:
- a. It is over 3 miles from their home to the educational placement.
  - b. It is less than 3 miles from their home to the educational placement but it would not be safe for the young person, even if accompanied by an adult, to walk from home to that placement.
  - c. The young person is unable to walk to the school or education placement due to their learning difficulty and/or disability, or because of a temporary or long term medical condition. Evidence is required from a GP or consultant.

### Concessionary/Subsidised Travel for those aged 16-19

38. Students who do not have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who are beyond statutory school age, are aged 16 to 19, and attend either a college or a school may use the concessionary travel scheme where it is necessary to enable them to access school or college. The concessionary travel scheme makes places available on transport provided for those who are eligible for free home to school transport.
39. Oxfordshire residents aged 16-19 for whom Henley College is the nearest Post16 provision will need to pay the distance related charges set out in the concessionary scheme if they obtain places on transport operated directly, indirectly or in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council. The charge will be reviewed on an annual basis. There will be a review of the policy regarding Post16 transport to Henley College during the academic 2014/15 (at the time of going to print the exact dates of the review were not available).
40. In exceptional circumstances, and only where places on relevant home to school transport routes are unavailable, season tickets on public transport may be provided for travel to the designated college or school from the student's home address at the relevant concessionary charge rate. This is meant to apply where a home to school transport route is full and it would be possible to use public transport and so avoid the unnecessary additional public expense of contracting for additional capacity on that route.

## **Travel Arrangements for Learners with Learning Difficulties Assessments (Aged 19-24)**

41. An annual Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Transport Policy Statement will be issued by the LA either with the Post 16 Transport Policy Statement or separately. This document will specify any transport or other arrangements, any payment of travel expenses and concessionary schemes which the LA plans to make available to this group of learners in the following academic year to publication. The Policy Statement will also set out the arrangements for facilitating boarding provision outside both the further education and higher education sectors. Complaints can be heard by the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee.

### **The Concessionary Travel Scheme**

42. Concessionary seats are spare seats on home to school transport routes. These are routes that are operated for the benefit of those who are entitled to free transport to and from school. The key points regarding this scheme are set out below:
  - a. The Council cannot guarantee that a young person will keep the seat for longer than two terms
  - b. The parent, or in the case of Years 12 and 13 must complete an application form for concessionary travel
  - d. Parents are required to pay for two terms travel in advance
  - e. The price charged covers a return journey for every school day of the relevant period
  - f. There will be no rebates for those deciding to travel for less than the maximum number of possible journeys per term, for example there is no rebate if a young people decides to use his/her bus pass for morning travel and returns by some other private means in the afternoon
  - g. If a seat is available a bus pass will only be issued on receipt of a completed application form, and correct payment
  - h. No guarantee can be given that the bus will continue to run throughout a young person's time at a school, or that the place on the bus will not be withdrawn at some future date if the place is required for a young person who is entitled to free travel
  - i. The concessionary charge will be waived for the following low income groups:
    - young people who are aged 8 to 19 in the relevant academic year in which travel is required who are eligible for Free School Meals on income grounds;
    - young people who are aged 5, 6 or 7 in the relevant academic year in which travel is required who would have been eligible for Free School Meals on income grounds;

- young people aged 5 to 19 in the relevant academic year in which travel is required whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit.
- j. When there are more requests to pay for seats on a particular route than there are seats available they will be allocated in the descending order of priority shown in the table “Priority for Concessionary Places”.

### Priority for Concessionary Places

Priority	Category
1.	Those with a Statement of Special Educational Need or Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan naming the school
2.	Looked After Children
3.	Years 12 and 13 (if there is no available service bus route)
4.	Children in receipt of Free School Meals or whose parent /parents are in receipt of the maximum of Working Tax Credit
5.	Those who travelled on the route the previous term
6.	By year group, in ascending order of priority from F1 to Year 11 (or to Year 13 if there is an available service bus route)
7.	Those living closest using the shortest designated public route on the County Council’s Geographic Information System

41. The current charges payable under the concessionary fares scheme are shown in the table “Charges 2015”. These charges are subject to annual review.

### Charges 2015/16

Reception (F1) to Year 13 and under 3 miles	££304.92 per annum (payable in three instalments)
Reception (F1) to Year 13 and over 3 miles from home to school/college	£568.26 per annum (payable in three instalments)

43. Fares for those living under 3 miles from the school/college attended will increase to £320.17 in 2016, £336.18 in 2017, £352.99 in 2018 and £370.64 in 2019.
44. Fares for those living over 3 miles from the school/college attended would increase to £596.67 in 2016, £626.51 in 2017, £657.83 in 2018 and £690.72 in 2019.

## **Transport Appeals**

45. The Local Authority will annually publish the appeals process on its website. This will set out a clearly and transparently the two stage process (with paper copies available on request) for parents who wish to challenge a decision about:
- the transport arrangements offered;
  - their child's eligibility;
  - the distance measurement in relation to statutory walking distances; and
  - the safety of the route.

### **Stage one: Review by the Admissions and Transport Services Manager**

46. A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's home to school transport decision to make a written request asking for a review of the decision.
47. The written request should detail why the parent believes the decision should be reviewed and give details of any personal and/or family circumstances the parent believes should be considered when the decision is reviewed.
48. Within 20 working days of receipt of the parent's written request the Admissions and Transport Services Manager will review the original decision and send the parent a detailed written notification of the outcome of the review, setting out:
- the nature of the decision reached;
  - how the review was conducted (including the standard followed, for example route safety assessments that have followed Road Safety GB guidance);
  - information about other departments and/or agencies that were consulted as part of the process;
  - what factors were considered;
  - the rationale for the decision reached; and
  - information about how the parent can escalate their case to stage two (if appropriate).
49. Complex Stage 1 cases may take longer than the timescale given in paragraph 48.

### **Stage two: Review by an independent appeal panel**

50. A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's stage one written decision notification to make a written request to escalate the matter to stage two.
51. Within 40 working days of receipt of the parents request an independent appeal panel will consider written and verbal representations from both the parent and officers

involved in the case and give a detailed written notification of the outcome (within 5 working days), setting out:

- the nature of the decision reached;
- how the review was conducted (including the standard followed e.g. Road Safety GB);
- information about other departments and/or agencies that were consulted as part of the process;
- what factors were considered;
- the rationale for the decision reached; and
- information about the parent's right to put the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman (see below).

52. Stage 2 appeals will be heard by a panel of three councillors from the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee.
53. The Clerk to the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee will not be a member of the Admissions Team, the Social Care and Transport Team or the Environment & Economy Department.
54. A representative of the Admissions Team will present the LA's reasons for not providing transport and appellants can present a case in writing and /or in person (if the parent wishes, accompanied by a friend). The format of the appeal is set out below:
  - a. Presentation of the LA's case by the LA representative
  - b. Committee members and the parent are able to ask questions of the LA representative
  - c. Presentation of the parent's case
  - d. Summing up by the LA representative
  - e. Summing up of the parents case
  - f. Both the LA representative and the parent/parents friend leave the hearing together
  - g. Consideration of the case by the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee
  - h. The Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee makes a decision as to whether to uphold or refuse the appeal
55. The decision of the Appeals & Tribunals Sub-Committee will be considered binding by the LA and there is no further right of appeal.
56. The LA will not consider requests for a further transport appeal within the school year unless there has been a significant change of circumstance.
57. Complex Stage 2 cases may take longer than the timescale given in paragraph 51.

### “Split Village” Entitlement

**Free transport is available from all addresses in the villages listed below to the catchment/designated area school as well as the nearest school**

Villages	Number of addresses nearest each school listed	Percentage of addresses nearest to each school listed	Catchment/nearest school
<b>Long Hanborough</b>			
Bartholomew	785	70.09%	Catchment/designated area
The Marlborough CE	330	29.46%	Nearest school
Wood Green	5	0.45%	Nearest school
Total	1120		
<b>Ascot-Under-Wychwood</b>			
Chipping Norton	199	75.95%	Nearest school
Burford	63	24.05%	Catchment/designated area
Total	262		
<b>Watchfield</b>			
Faringdon Community College	262	29.01%	Catchment/designated area
Highworth Warenford	641	70.99%	Nearest school
Total	903		
<b>Dry Sandford</b>			
Larkmead	15	65.22%	
Fitzharry's	8	34.78%	Catchment
Total	23		
<b>Old Boars Hill</b>			
Matthew Arnold	35	50.00%	Nearest school
Fitzharry's	35	50.00%	Catchment/designated area
Total	70		
<b>Yatscombe Copse</b>			
St Gregory The Great Catholic	49	54.44%	Nearest school
Fitzharry's	41	45.56%	Catchment/designated area
Total	90		

<b>Sutton Courtenay (addresses for male children)</b>			
St Birinus	611	58.52%	
John Mason	408	39.08%	Catchment/designated area
Larkmead	25	2.39%	
Total	1044		
<b>Sutton Courtenay (addresses for female children)</b>			
Didcot Girls	739	70.79%	
John Mason	292	27.97%	Catchment/designated area
Larkmead	13	1.25%	
Total	1044		
<b>Milton (addresses for male children)</b>			
St Birinus	276	59.87%	
Larkmead	185	40.13%	Catchment/designated area
Total	461		
<b>Milton (addresses for female children)</b>			
Didcot Girls	454	98.48%	
Larkmead	7	1.52%	Catchment/designated area
Total	461		
<b>Kirtlington</b>			
The Marlborough CE	335	85.24%	Catchment/designated area
Gosford Hill	7	1.78%	
Heyford Park Free School	51	12.98%	
Total	393		
<b>Adderbury</b>			
Blessed George Napier	823	69.33%	
The Warriner	364	30.67%	Catchment/designated area
Total	1187		
<b>Great Haseley</b>			
Lord Williams's	61	36.53%	
Wheatley Park	106	63.47%	Catchment/designated area
Total	167		
<b>Catchment/designated area schools are shown in blue</b>			