



St. Sebastian's Church of England Primary School and Nursery

2024 – 25 Admissions Policy

"A school family with a Christian ethos, where we help each other to flourish."

St. Sebastian's School and Nursery values highly its Christian ethos, its close links with local churches and the Diocese of Oxford. We provide a distinctively Christian, yet inclusive, environment in which each child is motivated to acquire skills for life and a love of learning. As a church school, we welcome applications from Christian families, and those of other faiths or none. We ask all parents applying for a place at our school to respect this ethos and its importance to the whole school community.

The governors have made every effort to ensure that these arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code 2021 and all relevant legislation, including that on infant class sizes and equal opportunities.

The Keys Academy Trust, not Wokingham Local Authority (the LA), is responsible for determining admission arrangements to the school. However, under co-ordinated admissions arrangements, applications to the school for entry to the Reception year 2024-25 must be made to the home LA (i.e. the Local Authority you pay your Council Tax to) which may not be Wokingham. The school is a partner in the coordinated admission arrangements for primary admissions in Wokingham LA and follows their admission timetable. This policy has been prepared by the Governing Body in consultation with the Keys Academy Trust and the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education and agreed with the relevant Admissions authorities and parents.

There are 26 places (the published admission number or PAN) available.

Admission arrangements to the Reception Year in September 2024

Pupils are normally admitted at the beginning of the school year (1 September – 31 August) in which they reach their fifth birthday. Parents whose child was born between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020 may apply for them to be admitted to the Reception Year in September 2024.

Parents of a child whose fifth birthday falls between 1 September 2024 and 31 March 2025 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 2024/25), although children may 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 2025 and 31 August 2025 (summer born children) parents can defer the date that their child is admitted to school but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age ie when they reach their fifth birthday. They should apply in the normal way for a Reception place in September 2025.

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

Parents (see Note 1) wishing to apply for the Reception Year in September 2024 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 2024. Applications received after this date will normally only be considered after all those received on or before the cut-off date. Offers and refusals of places will be sent by the home LA on 17 April 2024.

Application, Admission Decisions and Offer Dates:

These dates are applicable to Wokingham Borough Council residents – other local authority dates may vary.

Applications for entry in the school year September 2024- August 2025 to be received by the LA by:	15 January 2024
Offer letters will be sent out by the LA by:	17 April 2024
Acceptances received by:	3 May 2024

Over-subscription criteria

Children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming St. Sebastian's School and Nursery will always be offered places.

If there are fewer applications than places available, all children will be offered places. If there is greater demand for admission than there are places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below:

- 1 Looked-after children and children who were previously looked after, including those children who appear to have been in state care outside England, but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted. (See Note 2)
- 2 Families who have exceptional medical or social needs that make it essential that their child attends St. Sebastian's School and Nursery rather than any other. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from the appropriate professional person involved with the family. (See Note 3)
- 3 Children with a normal home address (See Note 4) in the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Sebastian's (Map attached to this policy document) and with a sibling (see Note 5) 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 who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.
- 4 Children with a normal home address in the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Sebastian's (Map attached to this policy document).

5 Children with a normal home address outside the Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Sebastian's (Map attached to this policy document) 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 who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.

6 Children, one of whose parents worships regularly (see Note 6) at St Sebastian's Church. Verification of regular worship is required in the form of the incumbent's signature on the supplementary form.

7 Children, one of whose parents worships regularly (see Note 6) at another Christian Church that is affiliated to 'Churches Together in Britain and Ireland', the 'Evangelical Alliance' or any other Christian church that ascribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. Verification of regular worship from the minister at the relevant Church is required in the form of his/her signature on the supplementary form.

8 Other children.

Proximity of the child's home, as measured by the straight line distance (see Note 7) between the home and the school with those living nearer being accorded the higher priority, will serve to differentiate between children in criteria 1 to 8 should the need arise. 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.

All Other Admissions

Admission to the school during the school year depends on whether or not there are places available. All year groups at the school have 26 places. Applications must be made directly to the LA on a form available from the LA. 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 to 8 above), a place will be offered.

If parents are moving house, the LA will ask for evidence of the move when considering any application for a place. Documentary evidence in the form of a solicitor's letter to confirm exchange of contracts, or a rental agreement for at least a period of six months will be required (Armed Forces personnel and crown servants 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. We will also ask for evidence that any previous house owned has been sold or is being sold. 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. 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. 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.

Admission outside normal age group

Requests from parents for places outside a normal age group will be considered carefully, eg for those who have missed education due to ill health. Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances and a decision made based on what is in the pupil's best interests. It is recommended that parents discuss their wishes with the head teacher in advance of applying for a place. The governors may ask relevant professionals for their opinion. If a place in the requested age group is refused, but one in the normal age group is offered, then there is no right of appeal.

Waiting Lists

The LA maintains waiting lists for those children who are not offered a place, and the 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.

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.

Fair Access

The school participates in Wokingham LA'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.

Appeals

Any parent not offered a place for their child at their preferred school has the right of appeal to an independent appeals panel. Details of appeals arrangements are available from the school, including the date by which an appeal should be submitted. In the event of an unsuccessful appeal against non-admission to the school, the school will not consider any further application for a child 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.

Further information

Further information can be obtained from the School Secretary:

Telephone 01344 772427

Email admin@st-sebastians.wokingham.sch.uk

Notes

Date of last full consultation: January 2021

Date of policy determination: February 22nd 2023

Note 1: "Parent" is defined in law (The Education Act 1996) as either:

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

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

Note 2: 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. Previously looked after children are children who have been adopted, subject to child arrangement orders or special guardianship orders. Adopted children are those for whom an adoption order is 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 (eg a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order). Internationally adopted, previously looked after children – IAPLC. These children now have the same priority as those looked after and previously looked after children in England. A "looked-after child" includes any child who appears to have been in state care outside England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

Note 3: When applying under criterion 2 (exceptional medical or social needs), you must include supporting evidence from an independent professional person who is aware of the situation and supports your reasons for preferring St. Sebastian's School and Nursery. This 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 should be a doctor, health visitor, social worker, etc. who is aware of your child's or your own case. The school reserves the right to ask for further evidence or clarification where necessary and may seek the advice of appropriate educational professionals where necessary.

Note 4: By normal home address, we mean the child's home address. 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.

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 to offer a place. We will take into account, for example, the following:

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- 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
- where the child is registered with his/her GP
- any other evidence the parents may supply to verify the position.

We may ask for evidence of the normal home address in the form of a recent bill, 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 or if there is any doubt that the parents and child are not living at the address given on the application form, the school may seek further evidence. 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 (eg 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 the application has been made, but before any offer of a place has been made, the home LA must be informed.

If parents are moving, we will ask for evidence of the move, when considering any application for a place under the co-ordinated scheme.

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. 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. 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.

There are special arrangements for families of service personnel with a confirmed posting or crown servants returning from overseas. If the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares the relocation date, and if there is a place available, it will be offered even though there is not an intended address or the family is not yet living in the area.

Note 5: 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.

Note 6: Attending a regular church service at least once a month over the year preceding the application. For applicants who have moved into the area, previous church attendance will be taken into account. Provided that verification from a previous church is included in the application.

Note 7: The straight line distance used to determine proximity of the home to the school will be measured by Wokingham LA's Geographical Information System.

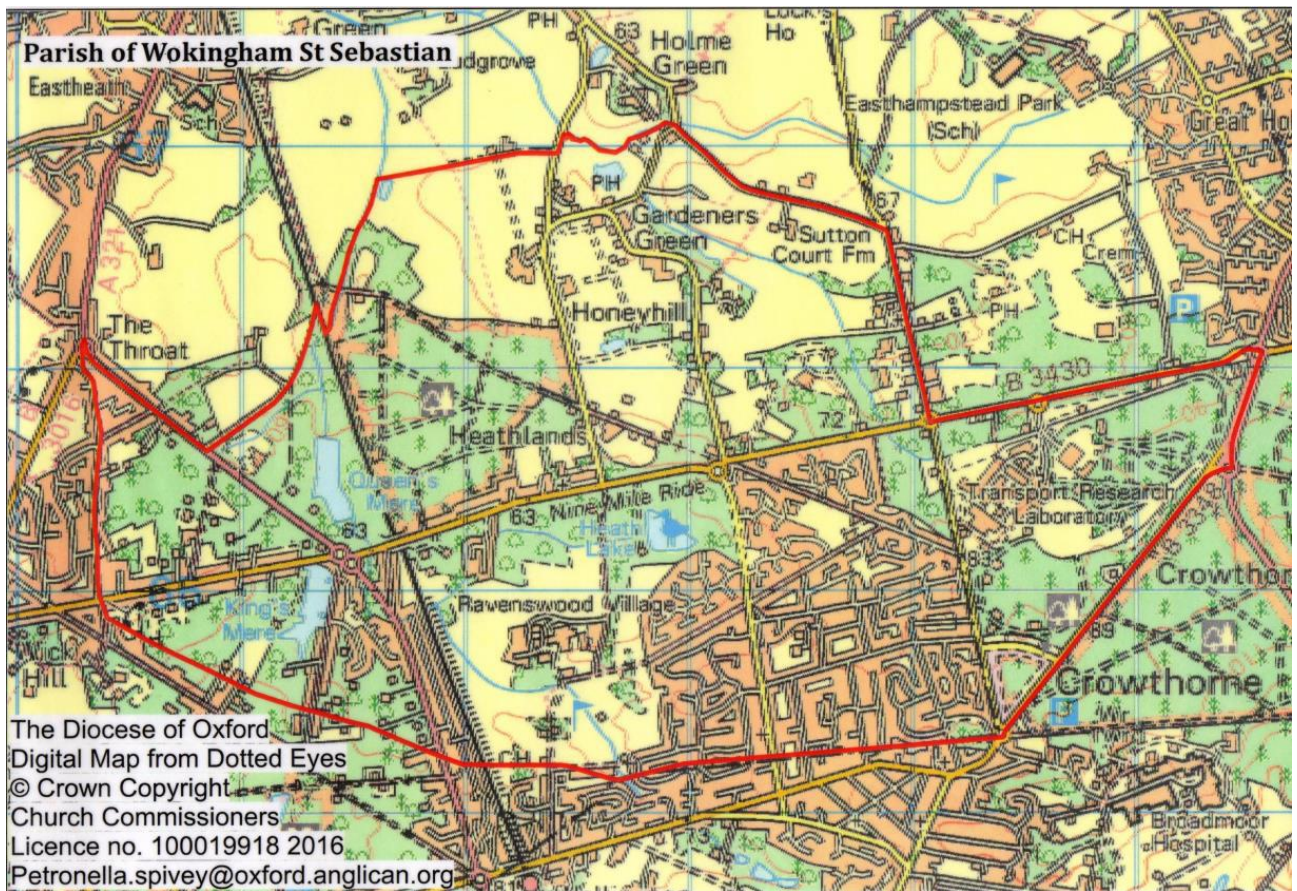
Next Review Date: Autumn 2023

For further information please contact the School:

The Headteacher
St Sebastian's C of E Primary School and Nursery
Nine Mile Ride
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 3AT

Telephone: 01344 772427

Map of St Sebastian's Parish



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Date of policy determination: February 22nd 2023

**Saint Sebastian's Church of England
Primary School and Nursery**

Governors' Supplementary Information Form
For Admission to St Sebastian's School
2024-25

Child's Surname.....

Forenames.....

Address.....

..... **Post Code**.....

Name of parent/guardian.....

Please read the school's admission arrangements carefully. All applicants applying on denominational grounds (under criteria 6 or 7) need to complete this supplementary form, and then return it **directly to the school**, who will acknowledge receipt. You will need to have the form countersigned by your priest or minister to confirm the information you have given.

In the event of prolonged church closure, the school will seek advice from the Diocese and The Keys Academy Trust.

Please note that the common application form should be returned to your home Local Authority.

In what year do you wish your child/ren to start school?

Which criterion are you applying under?

Which church do you attend?

Have you been attending weekday or Sunday services at this church at least once a month, over the past year? (Please circle)

Yes / No

I certify that the information given in answer to the questions above is complete and correct.

Signed.....Date.....
[Parent or Guardian]

To be completed by the Parish Priest or Minister

I verify/do not verify that, to the best of my knowledge, the answers given by the parent/guardian are correct.

I verify/do not verify that the church which I serve and at which the applicant worships is a Christian Church that is affiliated to 'Churches Together in Britain and Ireland', the 'Evangelical Alliance' or any other Christian church that ascribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

Signed.....

Name (please print)

Position*.....

Address.....

.....

Telephone number.....

Date.....

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

We may need to write to your parish priest or minister directly, in order to clarify the information given on this form.

Please return this form directly to St. Sebastian's School

For St. Sebastian's School office purposes only:

Agreed by:

Chair of Admissions
Headteacher
Governor

The table below gives a breakdown of number of applications against the criteria at the time of allocation. St Sebastian’s School operates under the equal preference system when allocating places. The number of pupils against criteria at the time of acceptance may indicate that pupils in the lower criteria would be successful in their application. The School may be contacted for further information regarding the process.

Applications for the Year 2022/2023	
Criteria number*	Number of applicants
1. Looked after	0
2. Exceptional medical or social needs	0
3. Catchment and sibling	3
4. Catchment	7
5. Sibling	6
6. St. Sebastian’s Church	0
7. Church other	1
8. Other	6
Late applicants	0
Total Applicants	23

* The full list of criteria relevant to the table above can be found in the Admission policy for 2022/23.