

Somerset Local Authority (LA)

Admission Arrangements applying to Community (C) or Voluntary Controlled (VC) Schools

Starting school at a Primary, First, Infant, Junior or Middle school in September 2013 or joining any year group during the academic year

Somerset LA is the Admissions Authority for all C and VC schools located within Somerset. All admission decisions are taken by the LA for entry to these schools.

These admission arrangements should be read in conjunction with the LA 2013 coordinated admissions scheme.

Applications to start school for the first time - should be submitted on-line at www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions. Paper applications are available to download from the Somerset County Council website at www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions , or upon request by telephoning Somerset Direct on 08454564038. Any supporting information must be received by the deadline using the appropriate Supplementary Information Form (SIF).

Applications and SIFS must be submitted by 23:59 hours on 15 January 2013, otherwise the application will be recorded as late and cannot be considered until all on time applications have been dealt with.

Decisions in connection with on time applications will be sent out by email (for on line applicants) or second class letter post sent out on 19 April 2013.

Decision letters will include information explaining how to appeal against any decision to refuse admission.

Admissions during the academic year - must be submitted using the LA in-year application form (hard copy only) to;

In-Year Admissions
Placements and Entitlement Team
Children and Young People's Directorate
County Hall
Taunton TA1 4DY

There is a 4.00pm deadline for receipt of applications each working day. Applications will be processed in strict date order and a decision will be notified in writing by second class post to the applicant within ten school days. Where a place cannot be provided, the right of appeal will apply.

Where there are more applications than places available within a particular year group, applications will be considered against the published oversubscription criteria.

Oversubscription Criteria

The school will be required to admit any child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), if the statement names the school, then;

- 1 Looked After Children – Children who are in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted.
- 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 schools as the nearest accessible school.
- 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 Children living in the catchment area.
- 5 Children of UK service personnel and other Crown servants relocating to Somerset LA with their service and not satisfying a higher criterion.
- 6 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.
- 7 In VC schools with a religious foundation:
 - Children and/or parent(s) who are practising members of the founding religious body of the school (eg, Anglican or Methodist).
 - Children and/or parent(s) who are practising members of other churches or religious denominations. (see important note 1).
- 8 Children not satisfying a higher criterion

Important Notes

1. Criterion 2 enables schools to plan with SEN Officers for the school entry of children with physical, medical or sensory impairments, where significant capital works (eg, accessible toilets, changing space, access to classrooms) are required. The lead time on these projects mean that school place outcome dates are too late for work to be completed in time for school entry in September. However, with the support of this criterion plans can be actioned with certainty early in the year.
2. “Practising” is defined as at least once a month for the last six months attendance at church by at least one parent and/or child (where necessary this may be confirmed with a member of the clergy).
3. All “straight line measurements” are taken using a GIS digital mapping system measured between ‘Address Points’.

4. Applications must be accompanied by an official government letter (e.g MOD, FCO, or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended address, the LA will process the application as if the family had already relocated

Tie Breaker

A tie breaker will be applied where the Admission Number is reached part way through any oversubscription criterion. This will determine which children are to be allocated places and which are to be refused. A straight line measurement will be calculated between the 'address point' of the child's home and 'address point' of the school for every child falling within the particular criterion. Places will be allocated to those children living nearest to the school by straight line, according to the LAs Geographic Information System (GIS). (see important note 2 above).

Distance Measurements

For the purpose of measuring home to school distance, all calculations will be measured using a straight-line measurement from the address point of the home to the address point of the school using the LA's GIS mapping system. (Address Point is a dataset that uniquely defines and locates residential, business and public postal addresses in Great Britain. It is created by matching information from Ordnance Survey digital map databases with more than 27 million addresses recorded in the Royal Mail). In the case of multi-level dwellings such as flats, the staircase will be included in the distance measurement.

Supplementary Information Form (SIF)

Any additional information to support a school place application to a community or Voluntary Controlled school must be received by the deadline, on the appropriate SIF, which is available from the Local Authority. (see Appendix 1 for Voluntary Controlled school Church SIF)

Appeals

Applicants whose school place application is turned down have the legal right to appeal to the Local Authority against the decision to refuse admission. Details concerning how to appeal are explained in the decision letter sent out by email or post on the published dates.

Waiting lists

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

Withdrawal of places

The Local Authority will consider withdrawing the offer of a place at a Community or Voluntary Controlled school if;

- An address used to support an application is subsequently found to be fraudulent or misleading.
- A child has not started at the school within 21 days of an agreed in-year admission start date

Statement of Special Educational Needs

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

Retained or accelerated entry

The Local Authority will consider applications for retained or accelerated entry (a year group other than the child's chronological age) to a Community or Voluntary Controlled school on a case by case basis. The reasons for the request must be fully explained on a Supplementary Information Form, to be submitted at the same time as the application form. Without full supporting information, the request cannot be considered.

Issues relating to shared residency arrangements

The administering of school applications may be severely delayed where shared residence arrangements are in place and parents/carers of the child submit 2 separate applications for different schools. In this situation the LA requires parents to resolve matters between themselves, and inform the LA which application should be processed. The LA will not become involved in private disputes. The LA does recognise that there may be situations where parents cannot ultimately reach an agreement between themselves and it is, therefore, necessary for the LA to take a decision. Where this is the case the LA will try to establish the child's permanent address and prioritise the application made by the parent living at this address.

Each parent will be required to write to the LA and inform them of the number of days each week the child spends with them. Where the child spends equal time with both parents the LA may ask for additional information including evidence of which parent/carer is in receipt of child benefit, or the name of the GP surgery at which the child is registered. When the LA has received all the necessary information from both parents a decision will be reached based on the evidence provided.

Multiple birth applications (for example twins)

In the case of multiple birth applications, where it would not normally be possible to admit one or more children within Admission Number, a place will be allocated above Admission Number at the point of allocation. This will ensure that multiple birth siblings can be allocated places at the same school (sibling definition still applies).

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

Children from Overseas

The Local Authority will not allocate a place to anyone moving into the country from abroad prior to their arrival in the county. The Admissions Authority will require proof of residency – see definitions. The only exceptions are children of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants (including Diplomats) returning to the area.

APPENDIX 3

Church of England Voluntary Controlled Schools in the Diocese of Bath and Wells School Admission Supplementary Information Forms



Notes for those applying for places at Church of England Voluntary Controlled Schools

If you wish for your application to be considered under any criteria relating to church attendance, you must ensure the following:

1. That the attached form is completed by you and signed by the relevant church representative (vicar, priest, minister, pastor, church warden) and submitted at the time of application.
2. That the information on the form matches and fulfils the requirements set out in the specific admissions arrangements of the school for which you are applying.
3. That the completed form, signed by both you and the clergy, reaches Somerset Local Authority by the closing date for submission of applications. This is 23.59 hours on 15th January 2013 for primary phase admission to school in September 2013.
4. That a separate supplementary form be submitted for each church school for which you are applying as each is likely to have differing admissions criteria.
5. If you have recently, or are about to move to a different area, that you ensure that the appropriate church representative of the church where you have been regularly worshipping signs the supplementary information form for your application. **Please ensure that they have seen the admissions requirements for the school/s for which you are applying and are satisfied that you meet the necessary criterion/criteria.**

Please Note:

- Failure to send the correctly completed supplementary information form to your Somerset Local Authority by the application submission closing date will mean that your application cannot be considered under any church attendance criterion.
- The need to obtain the signature from a previous member of clergy/church after moving house cannot be considered as a reason for a late application to be accepted.



PART A

School Admissions

Supplementary Information Form

In the event of oversubscription, priority will be given in criterion 7 of the oversubscription criteria (as published) to children who themselves, or whose parent(s)/carer(s) regularly attend (minimum of once a month for at least 6 months before the date of application) the church(es) named within the school's admissions arrangements.

Please only complete this form if you believe that you meet Criterion 7 of the respective over subscription criteria.

Please complete Part A, and give this form to your clergy leader (priest/minister/pastor), who will complete Part B and return it to your home local authority. The relevant clergy must return this form to the LA by the deadline for submission of admissions applications for the 2013 academic year, which is 23.59 hours on 15 January 2013 for primary phase admission to school.

Details of Child/Children

Surname:.....

First Name/s:.....

Address:.....

Tel:.....

Details of Church/Clergy

Name of Church:.....

Name of Clergy:.....

Address of Clergy:.....

Tel:.....

Signed:.....

Relationship to child/children:.....

Date:.....

PART B
School Admission
Supplementary Information Form -
To be completed by clergy



The parent/carer identified in Part A has applied for a place for their child/children at a Somerset Local Authority maintained Voluntary Controlled school for the academic year 2013. We ask that you confirm that either the child or the parent(s)/carer(s) regularly attends your church – at least once per month and has done for a minimum of 6 months prior to the date of application.

Please return this form to the home Local Authority by the deadline for submission of admission applications, which is 23.59 hours on 15 January 2013 for primary phase admission to school in September 2013.

Thank you for your assistance in completing this supplementary form.

Please note

If this form is not completed or does not reach the LA by the prescribed date, the applicant cannot be considered as eligible for consideration under any church attendance criterion.

.....

I,.....(insert name of clergy) confirm that the child or parent(s)/carer(s) identified in Part A has attended(name of church) at least once a month for not less than 6 months prior to the date of application.

Signed:.....

Date:.....



Church of England Voluntary Controlled Schools in the Diocese of Bath and Wells School Admission Supplementary Information Forms

Notes for clergy or those responsible and authorised to sign supplementary information forms for those applying to church schools under a church attendance criterion

Please note that the recommendation of the Bath & Wells DBE is that clergy do not work in isolation when looking at school admission supplementary information form requests. The DBE strongly recommends that it is best practice to have a sub-committee of at least three members, including clergy, church wardens and those with responsibility for Sunday school to consider these requests and be authorised to sign the form if it is agreed appropriate.

Please also note that the completion of this form and its return in time to meet the admission application deadlines is critical for the applicant, and without it the child cannot be considered eligible under any church attendance criteria, even if they are regular attendees at church.

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

6. That the attached form is completed by the applicant and signed by the relevant church representative (vicar, priest, minister, pastor, church warden) and returned by the application submission deadline of 23.59 hours on 15 January 2013.
7. That the information on the form matches and fulfils the requirements set out in the specific admissions arrangements of the school to which the application is being made. **Clergy must be clear that the specific criterion for each school is being met by the applicant and should see the admissions criteria so that they can check..**
8. The DBE recommends that schools use the criterion that either the child or at least one parent has attended worship at the church at least once a month for a minimum of 6 months prior to the time of the application. **Please note that this does vary from school to school, with some having far more rigorous requirements.**
9. **The DBE does recommend that the child or a parent has attended actual worship and that attendance at toddler groups or other activities that are held at the church does NOT meet the requirements.**
10. That the completed form, signed by both applicant and the clergy, reaches the applicant's home Local Authority by the closing date for submission of applications. This is 23.59 hours on 15th January 2013 for primary phase admission to school in September 2013.

11. That a separate supplementary form be completed for each Voluntary Controlled school for which the applicant is applying as each is likely to have differing admissions criteria.
12. For applicants who have recently, or are about to move to a different area, the supplementary information form should be completed by the clergy at the church where they have been regularly worshipping. It is the responsibility of the applicant to organise this and ensure that the SIF is completed and sent in on time.

Please Note:

The application process is a legal one and every effort **MUST** be made to ensure that applications and any supplementary forms are completed accurately and on time. If applicants are unsuccessful, they have the right to appeal, and the information provided by clergy can be critical to the outcome of both the application and appeal, particularly where a school is very popular and oversubscribed. Competition for places at some schools can be fierce and it is vital that information supplied is accurate. **Clergy should not be pressured into signing a form if they know that the applicant does not, or are in doubt as to whether the applicant does, meet the criteria laid down by the school. This is one reason why a committee should consider every application. It is also particularly helpful where there is an inter-regnum or where clergy have been in post less than 6 months.**