

Portesham CE VA Primary School
Admissions Policy
2020-2021

Introduction

This document sets out the policy of Portesham Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School with respect to Admissions. For the purposes of this policy, the Governing Body of Portesham CE VA Primary School is the admission authority. Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the churches at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the daily Christian act of worship and from Religious Education. Parents who wish their children to be admitted to the school, should complete the application form which can be obtained from the Local Authority. Every year the governing body will review and publish information concerning the Portesham's School admission policy. This will confirm the maximum number of children to be admitted to the school as a whole, the Pupil Admissions Number (PAN) which is currently 15 and explain how places will be allocated. In accordance with government legislation, the governing body will consult with the Diocesan Board of Education, the Local Authority and other local schools in respect of the admissions policy.

Aims

The overriding aim of this policy is that it should work for the benefit of all children and parents/guardians in our area. It should be simple to use and assist parents/guardians to take the best decisions on the preferred school for their children. It should contribute to improving standards for all pupils. The school aims to provide a place for all children whose address is within the designated area, defined as being Abbotsbury, Portesham and Langton Herring. It includes the hamlets of Corton, Coryates, Elworth, Friar Waddon, Little Waddon, New Barn, Shilvinghampton, Waddon and Rodden.¹

The address is the place where the child is permanently resident with his or her parent or parents or legal guardians. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility each part of the week, the "home address" will be considered to be the address of the person who receives Child Benefit for the child (proof of this will be required). However, parents should not assume that a place will automatically be allocated to their child.

Starting School

A full-time school place in the Reception class is available for children from the September following their 4th birthday. Parents can request part time admission until their child reaches compulsory school age. Where an offer of a place is made to a child below compulsory school age, parents have the right to defer their child's entry to school until later in the school year. The place is held for that child and is not available to be offered to another child. Entry may not be deferred beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the academic year for which admission is sought.

¹ Designated area means the area of benefit as defined in the school's Trust Deed.

Deadline for application

Applications for Reception Year entry for the academic year starting in September need to be formally registered with the Local Authority by the date stated on the Admissions forms for consideration by the admission authority. A receipt of the application will be issued. Portesham Church of England (VA) Primary School cannot guarantee places for children when there are no places available as a result of late applications for the normal year of entry or any application that relates to a different year group. The Governors have set a maximum class size of 30 pupils in Key Stage 1 and 32 pupils in Key Stage 2. Legislation states that no infant class may exceed 30 pupils. A decision on the admission of new entrants will be made during the autumn term, a year before the child's admission. The parents or guardians will receive written notification of the outcome from the Local Authority as soon as possible. All formal applications received after the deadline date stated on the Admissions Form will be considered in order of receipt. Written notification will be given as soon as possible after application.

Policy

The admissions policy of Portesham CE VA Primary School is, while there are adequate places, to offer a place to all applicants irrespective of gender, religion, ethnicity or country of origin, disability or academic ability. Admissions are subject to there being adequate places available in class and adequate teaching capacity/support. Admissions are subject to any constraints upon the school by the relevant authority (Salisbury Diocese, DFE, Local Authority). Priority will be accorded to those parents/guardians who have expressed a written preference on their application form, for their child/ren to attend Portesham CE VA Primary School. Where this school is named in a child's Statement of Special Educational Needs, the governing body recognises a duty to admit the child to the school.

Over-subscription Criteria

Where more applications have been received than places available or where to admit would conflict with the school fulfilling class size legislation, the following priorities shall apply in order:

1. **LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN OR A CHILD** who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order². A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

2. **VULNERABLE CHILDREN**
 - i. children of families with confirmed refugee status
 - ii. children with a medical condition or disability where written evidence is available from a senior clinical medical officer and the child's general practitioner or specialist showing that it would be detrimental to the child's health not to admit him/her to the school rather than any other. Details of this must accompany the initial application.

² An adoption order is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

A 'residence order' is as an 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. 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).

LIVING WITHIN THE SCHOOL'S DESIGNATED AREA AS DEFINED BELOW:

3. SIBLINGS

A child is considered in this category if an older sibling is attending the school at the deadline date, and will continue to do so when the sibling is admitted, and where the child lives within the designated area at the same address as the older sibling. Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/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.

4. PRACTISING CHRISTIANS

Those children from within the designated area who are regular (monthly or in the rural areas where services suitable for children are limited, at the discretion of the Governing Body in consultation with the clergy concerned) practising Christians, of whatever denomination, at a recognised church or religious group. (A recognised church is one that subscribes to the Churches Together in Britain and Northern Ireland) Confirmation of status will be requested from the relevant priest/ pastor.

5. OTHER CHILDREN

Children resident within the designated area who do not qualify under one of the criteria above.

LIVING OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL'S DESIGNATED AREA AS DEFINED BELOW:

6. SIBLINGS

A child is considered in this category if an older sibling is attending the school at the deadline date, and will continue to do so when the sibling is admitted, and where the child lives outside the designated area at the same address as the older sibling. Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/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.

7. PRACTISING CHRISTIANS

Those children from outside the designated area who are regular (monthly or in the rural areas where services suitable for children are limited, at the discretion of the Governing Body in consultation with the clergy concerned) practising Christians, of whatever denomination, at a recognised church or religious group. (A recognised church is one that subscribes to the Churches Together in Britain and Northern Ireland). Confirmation of status will be requested from the relevant priest/pastor.

8. OTHER CHILDREN

Children resident outside the designated area who do not qualify under one of the criteria above.

If the school is oversubscribed in criterion 3 then criterion 4 will be used as the determining factor. If the school is oversubscribed in criterion 6 then criterion 7 will be used as the determining factor.

In all other oversubscribed criteria the straight line distance from the front gate of the school to the front door of the child's home address will be used as the determining factor. If two or more children with the same priority for admission, live an indistinguishable distance from the school, but cannot be admitted, then the available places will be decided by the casting of lots.

Exceptional Circumstances

Due consideration will be given to applications from parents/ guardians who can demonstrate that admission to Portesham CE VA Primary School is necessary for the medical or social well-being of their child. However, parents/guardians must bring any 'special factors' to the attention of the school at the time of the original application. Where necessary the school reserves the right in such cases to seek supporting evidence from a doctor, social worker, or education welfare officer as appropriate. For children of statutory school age, only in the most exception circumstances will the school agree to defer entry to the school once an offer of a place is made, especially where such a deferral might deny a school place to another child. Once an offer of a school place has been made, it may only be lawfully withdrawn in very limited circumstances, which include an offer of place based upon a fraudulent or misleading application. Where an offer of place is withdrawn, the application will be considered afresh, and a right of appeal offered if an offer of place is refused.

Appeals Procedure

Parents have a right of appeal to an independent panel against the decision of the Governing Body to refuse application for a school place. Details of the appeals procedure are sent out with all refusal letters. Enquiries about this policy should be addressed to: The Clerk to the Governing Body at the school.

Note: Subject to the above policy and the relevant appeals procedure, decisions regarding admissions will be the responsibility of the Governing Body.