

Portesham CE VA Primary School Admissions Policy

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 school office. The Local Authority Common Application Form (CAF) can also be obtained from the Local Authority or via the Dorset For You website. Every year the Governing Body will review and publish information concerning the Portesham CE VA Primary School Admissions 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 Wadden, New Barn, Shilvinghampton, Waddon and Rodden. See footnote.

The address is the place where the child is permanently resident with his or her parent or parents or legal guardians. Evidence may be requested to show the address, for example: to which any Child Benefit is paid or at which the child is registered with a medical GP together with a recent utilities bill, council tax bill or tenancy agreement. This evidence will be used when reaching a decision on the child's home address for admissions purposes (including where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility each part of the week). 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). This may be a different address to that printed on the book itself. However, parents should not assume that a place will automatically be allocated to their child.

Footnote - designated area means the area of benefit as defined in the school's Trust Deed.

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.

Deadline for Application

Applications for Reception Year entry for the academic year starting in September **2018/2019** need to be formally registered with the Local Authority by the date stated on the CAF for consideration by the admission authority. A receipt of the application will be issued. Portesham CE 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. The Governing Body reserves the right to exceed the statutory limit of infant classes where the 31st child is a twin or from multiple births. 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 not be considered until after all of those which were received on time have been processed and then in accordance with the policy below. Written notification will be given as soon as possible. The Local Authority's Co-ordinated Admission Scheme will determine the deadline date for receipt of applications, the date when applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications and the programme for dealing with late applications, i.e., those received after the deadline for the normal admissions round.

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). Where Portesham CE VA Primary 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.

LIVING WITHIN THE SCHOOL'S DESIGNATED AREA AS DEFINED UNDER "AIMS" ON PAGE 1:

1. CHILDREN IN CARE

Children within Local Authority care as defined in Section 22 of the Children's Act 1989 for example, children in residential homes or foster care. Looked after children, or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, special guardianship order (1). A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

2. VULNERABLE CHILDREN

- i. Children of families with confirmed refugee status.
- ii. Children with a medical condition 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. Details of this must accompany the initial application.
- iii. Children where one or both parents have a disability which would make travel to a different school difficult. Evidence from a registered health professional such as a doctor or social worker will be required. Details of this must accompany the initial application.

3. CHILDREN OF STAFF

The children of teachers, teaching assistants and all support staff employed at the school for at least 2 years of continuous service at the date of application (or relevant closing date under the LA co-ordinated scheme for normal year of entry applications), or who will meet a relevant skill shortage. The term "children" includes adopted, foster and step children, living with that member of staff, in the same household.

4. 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. Step, half and foster siblings and adopted children are included in this category, as well as the children of couples who have registered a civil partnership.

5. 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 Ireland including the Evangelical Alliance). Confirmation of status will be requested from the relevant priest/pastor.

6. OTHER CHILDREN

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

If the school is oversubscribed the criteria will be applied in order.

LIVING OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL'S DESIGNATED AREA AS DEFINED UNDER "AIMS" ON PAGE 1:

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If the school is oversubscribed the criteria will be applied in order. 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.

Waiting Lists

It is always necessary to complete a Local Authority CAF to apply for a school place. Registering interest with the school on a "waiting list" before the admissions round guarantees neither a place nor priority within the over-subscription criteria. Offers of places will be made by the Local Authority on the school's behalf.

If the school is oversubscribed for children due to start in Reception (FSU!), a waiting list will be maintained for that particular year group only. The position on the list will be determined by applying the published over-subscription criteria and not by date of receipt. This will mean a position will change if a later application is received from someone with higher priority according to the over-subscription criteria. The existence of a waiting list does not remove the right of appeal against any refusal of a place from any unsuccessful applicant.

Names will only be removed from the list if a written request is received, or if the offer of a place that becomes available is declined. The waiting list will close at the end of the Autumn term. At that time parents of pupils on existing lists must confirm in writing their wish to be placed on a newly constructed waiting (or continued interest) list.

We encourage parents/guardians not to hold more than one offer of a school place.

The Local Authority should be advised if parents/guardians wish to decline the offer of a place at Portesham CE VA Primary School.

Exceptional Circumstances

For children of statutory school age, only in the most exceptional 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
Portesham CE VA Primary School
Winters Close
Portesham
Dorset DT3 4HP

Tel: 01305 871283

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