Oakbank Admissions policy and arrangements for the academic year 2013-14

Oakbank is a publically funded, co-educational, secondary Free School, sponsored by CfBT Schools Trust (CST). This document details the policy to be followed for admissions to Oakbank during the academic year 2013/2014.

Year 7 Entry

The admissions number for entry in September 2013 is 112.

Oakbank uses the Wokingham Borough Council Admissions Service which will publicise the school to parents in the same literature as for other Wokingham schools. Oakbank will participate in the co-ordinated arrangements made by Wokingham Borough Council. Parents/carers wishing to send their children to Oakbank should submit an application to their Local Authority and follow the guidance of that Local Authority regarding deadlines for submitting the application. This information will be published in the Local Authority admission guides.

Applications received after the published deadline (31 October 2012) will be treated as a 'late' application and be considered after the on-time applications have been allocated. If there is good reason i.e. the family has moved to the area after the closing date or the illness of a single parent prevented them submitting an on-time application the application may be treated as on-time, provided it is received by 1 January 2013. In such instances evidence may be required.

Children with a statement of special educational needs that names the school in the statement will be allocated a place above all other applicants.

If there are more applicants than places, places will be offered in accordance with the following criteria in order of priority:

A. Looked after children or children who were looked after: 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 function (see definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). Previous "looked after children" include those children under the terms of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (section 46 relating to adoption orders), Children Act 1989, section 8 which defines a "residence order" as an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live and section 14A which defines a "special guardianship order" as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians). Applications received under the Criterion A must be made by the person with parental responsibility for the child (e.g. the child's social worker, acting on behalf of the local authority for a looked after child) and will need to be supported by the following official documentation, as applicable:

i. Confirmation by the home local authority that the child is looked after or

ii. Confirmation by the local authority that last looked after the child confirming that the child was looked after immediately prior to the issuing of one of the following orders
    a. Adoption order
    b. Residence order
    c. Special guardianship order.

B. Children of Founders of the school.

C. Children who have a brother or sister or step-brother or step-sister who have one or more parents in common, or any other child for whom the parent has parental responsibility, living at the same address, who will be at the school when the applicant will enter the school.

D. Children living nearest to the school measured as the crow flies, that is in a straight line from the child's home to the main entrance of the school (travel by private car or public transport is not taken into account) within each of three identified segments in the following proportions:

a. Shinfield segment (30% of remaining PAN)
b. Grazeley and Three Mile Cross segment (30% of remaining PAN)
c. Spencer's Wood and Swallowfield segment (40% of remaining PAN).

The boundaries of the segments are set out in the **attached map**. In the case of one or more segments being under-subscribed remaining places will be allocated to the other segments in-line with the original proportions allocated (to the nearest whole place), for example if the Grazeley and Three Mile Cross segment is undersubscribed by seven places, four of the remaining places will be allocated to the Spencers Wood and Swallowfield segment and three to the Shinfield segment.

E. Other applicants. After places have been filled under the first three criteria, any remaining places will be offered to children living beyond the identified segment boundaries i.e. at a distance of more than four miles from the school. Where the number of applicants in this category exceeds the number of places, offers will be determined by random allocation.

Where the application of oversubscription criteria would result in splitting children with either the same birth dates or children born in the same academic year from the same family, or the creation of a partial place only due to the reallocation of places between segments, then places will be offered even if this will result in the school going above its admission number.

Tie-breaker

In the event of two or more applicants tying when any of the admission criteria is applied, positions will be determined by random allocation. For example, this may occur when children in the same year group live at the address e.g. in a block of flats or if the distance between the home and the school is exactly the same. This process will be by supervised drawing of lots, carried out by at least 2 officers at Wokingham Borough Council

The distance from home to Oakbank School is the straight-line distance measured from the front door of the child's residence to the main entrance of the school site. The distance is measured using Wokingham Borough Council's computerised mapping system and will be measured as a straight line between the Land Property Gazetteer address point and the school.

Verification of information

Applications are processed on the basis of the child's single permanent home address, living with parent(s), or a carer/legal guardian. Evidence is required of a single address. Where this is changing, evidence regarding the new address, and disposal of the previous address through a contract for sale or otherwise, will be required. Parents will be asked to declare that the address used will be their place of residence beyond the date of the pupil starting school. The school will reserve its right to carry out further investigation and require additional evidence, and to reject applications or withdraw offers of places, if it believes it has grounds to do so. In such cases parents have recourse to putting their application through the independent appeals process.

If a child spends part of the week with parents at different addresses, the home address will be where they usually spend the majority of the school week (Sunday 6pm to Friday, including nights) with a parent. Where a family claims to be resident at more than one address, justification and evidence of the family's circumstances (e.g. legal separation) will be required. The home address will also be considered on the basis of the child benefit payment arrangements. If a child does not live at their parent(s) address we need to know the reasons for this. The reasons would need to be supported by official documentation. Temporary addresses cannot be used to obtain school places, e.g. temporary addresses whilst retaining a previous permanent home will not be accepted.

Where a parent has two or more properties, evidence will be required showing the rental, or disposal, of the previous property. Reference will be made to Council Tax and school records. If an applicant is moving house and wishes to use the new address for the allocation of places, evidence will be required that the parent and child has moved and are living in the new home by 1 January 2013. If the move takes place later or information is provided later, the school will only be able to treat the new address for waiting list purposes and consider this information after the initial allocation of places has taken place.

False information, or the omission of material information, may result in disqualification, or the loss of a place even after it has been offered, accepted or taken up.

Accepting or declining the offer of a place

Letters informing applicants of the outcome of their applications will be sent by first-class post on **1st March 2013**.

Parents are required to accept or decline the allocated place using the form sent with the allocation letter. The form must be returned to the local authority within two weeks from the date of the offer letter. If a form is not received, there will be one further written warning and failure to respond may result in the place being withdrawn. Parents are requested to advise the local authority at any stage, if they are not accepting the place for any reason.

Waiting Lists

After 1 March 2013 a “waiting list" will be administered if the school has more applicants than places available. A child’s position on the waiting list is determined by applying the over-subscription criteria as described below. Positions on the waiting list may go up or down due to pupil withdrawals or new or revised applications and no account is taken of the length of time spent on the waiting list. Waiting lists will be maintained until such time as the policy is changed, to fill places that may become available during the school year. Parents will receive periodic requests to see if they wish to remain on the list. Children who are the subject of a direction by the local authority to admit, or who are allocated to Oakbank in accordance with an in-year fair access protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

In Year admissions to Years 7-8 (during 2013/14)

Applications for entry to Year 7 after the end of the routine admissions round (ending on 31 August) and applications for entry into Year 8 at any time will be processed as in-year applications and applications will be co-ordinated by Wokingham Borough Council according to published admission arrangements and timescales. See www.wokingham.gov.uk/admissions.

The admission number in 2013/14 is 84 for Year 8 and 112 for Year 7.

Parents wishing to apply for a place at the school should obtain from their Local Authority a copy of their common application form. This should be completed and returned to Wokingham Borough Council.

If there are pupils on a waiting list for the year into which the applicant is seeking admission, then the pupil will be placed on that waiting list in a position determined by application of the criteria used in determining initial admissions to Year 7. Pupils will be admitted from the waiting list in order as space becomes available.

If there is no pupil on the waiting list for the year into which the applicant is seeking admission, then the governors will determine whether a place can be offered to the applicant. If at the time of this determination the school has applications from more than one pupil for admission to the same year group, all the applications will be ordered according to the criteria used in determining initial admissions to Year 7 and will be considered in that order.

In reaching a decision on an application for admission to a full year group, the governors will normally refuse a place unless they are statutorily obliged to admit the applicant or the application is covered by Wokingham Borough Council’s Fair Access Protocols.

Out-of-age-group admissions will only be agreed where there is consensus that it is in the best interests of the child; the circumstances of each case will be considered individually. Such a consensus would be reached between the parents, the schools concerned (the current school and Oakbank0 and any relevant professionals asked for their opinion on the case by Oakbank.

Parents are required to accept or decline the allocated place using the form sent with the allocation letter. The form must be returned to the local authority within two weeks from the date of the offer letter. If a form is not received, there will be one further written warning and failure to respond may result in the place being withdrawn. Parents are requested to advise the local authority at any stage, if they are not accepting the place for any reason.

Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on the waiting list if they confirm that they wish to be.

Appeals

Students refused a place at the school, are entitled to appeal to an independent appeals panel. Information about this process will be given in the decision letter sent by the local authority on behalf of the Governing Body. The decisions of the appeals panel are binding on the school.

In addition to the right to appeal, unsuccessful applicants will be offered an opportunity to be placed on the waiting list.

12th July 2012