Admissions Policy
2021/2022

Signature:

Gregg Mockridge - Headteacher
West Somerset College
West Somerset College provides education for students from age 13-19. There are two points of entry for admissions into Year 9 and Year 12. Applications for Year 9 places will be accepted under the LA Co-ordinated Scheme. Year 12 applications should be made to West Somerset College directly. West Somerset College’s published admissions number (PAN) is 356.

Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust is the admissions authority for West Somerset College. The Local Governing Body (LGB) administers the Policy on behalf of the Trust.

All applications for admissions to Year 9 for September entry must be made to Somerset Local Authority secondary phase admissions and will be considered under the Equal Preference ranking system of allocation. Somerset LA will forward all applications to the school and the governing body will rank them against the oversubscription criteria set out below. This will then be returned to Somerset LA under the co-ordinated admissions scheme and the LA will make a single offer of a place on behalf of the College.

In the event of over subscription at the September point of entry, applications will be ranked against the following over-subscription criteria for the school.

Oversubscription Criteria for Year 9

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

1. Looked After Children (LAC) – 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 multiagency 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 living outside the catchment area, with an older sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

6. Children not satisfying a higher criterion

Notes:

1. Criterion 2 enables the College to plan with Local Authority SEN Officers for the school entry of children with physical, medical or sensory impairments, where significant capital works (eg, accessible toilets, changing space, and 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. All “straight line measurements” are taken using a GIS digital mapping system measured between ‘Address Points’.
**Siblings**
For the purposes of admissions at West Somerset College a sibling is defined as a child living at the same address as a half or full brother or sister, an adoptive brother or sister or children of the same household.

**Multiple Birth Applications, for example twins**
In the case of multiple birth applications, where it would only normally be possible to admit one child(ren) within Admission Number, a place(s) 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).

**Parent or Parent/Carer**
Natural parents, whether married or not, any person who although not a natural parent has parental responsibility for a child or younger person. Any person, who although not a natural parent has care of a child or young person (having care of, means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child is considered to be a parent in education law).

**Home Address**
The home address is the point from which a school place is allocated for the child. A home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with the person(s) who have care of the child.
Documentary evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required, together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of intended future changes of address unless house moves have been confirmed through the exchange of contracts or the signing of a formal lease agreement. The school reserves the right to seek further documentary evidence to support your claim to residence.
The school will not allocate a place to anyone moving into the country from outside the UK prior to their arrival in the country. The school will then require proof of residence as stated above. The only exceptions are children of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants (including Diplomats).
It should be noted that an address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. A fraudulent claim to an address may lead to the withdrawal of the offer of a place.
You must notify the Admissions and Entitlements Team, County Hall, Taunton of any change of address during the admissions process.

**Issues Relating to Shared Residency Arrangements**
Legislation and guidance states that only one offer per child is made by the Local Authority. Therefore where separated parents issue separate applications for their child the Local Authority can only offer one place. In this situation the Governing Body requires parents to resolve matters between themselves. If an agreement cannot be reached parents may wish to seek legal advice. The Governing Body will not become involved in private disputes. The Governing Body does recognise that there may be situations where parents cannot ultimately reach an agreement between themselves and it is, therefore, necessary for the Governing Body to take a decision. Where this is the case the Governing Body will try to establish where the child spends the majority of their time and prioritise the application made by the parent living at this address.
Each parent will be required to write to the Governing Body 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 Governing Body may ask for additional information including evidence of which parent/carer is in receipt of child benefit, and/or the name of the GP surgery at which the child is registered. When the
Governing Body has received all the necessary information from both parents a decision will be reached based on the evidence provided.

**Distance Measurement**
For the purposes 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 Local Authority GIS mapping system. An Address Point is a unique 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 by the Royal Mail). In the case of multilevel dwellings such as flats the staircase will be included in the distance measurement.

**Equal Preference with Ranking Allocation Model**
This approach requires the Local Authority to rank all applications against the published oversubscription criteria for West Somerset College and where the school is oversubscribed places will be allocated up to the Published Admissions Number (PAN) in strict priority order.

**Catchment Map**
A copy of West Somerset College’s catchment map is available on request from the Local Authority.

**Waiting List**
West Somerset College will operate a waiting list. Where an application for admission to the school is unsuccessful the application will be kept on a waiting list in order of over-subscription criteria until the end of the term to which the application refers. Should a place become available within the published admission number (356), it will be offered to the highest ranking application on the list at the time.

Children who are the subject of a direction by a Local Authority to admit or who are allocated to the school in accordance with the In-Year Fair Access Protocols, will take precedence over those children on a waiting list.

**In-Year Admissions**
Applications for a place during the academic year must be made directly to the school office, by completing the college’s Student Admission Form. A copy can be downloaded from the college website or collected/sent from Reception, or from the Local Authority. The college will consider applications on a weekly basis and applicants will receive a written response within 10 school days following receipt of the application. Where a school place is offered it will be held open for 14 school days and applicants will need to confirm acceptance within this time.

**Appeals**
An Independent Appeal Panel will be established. The determination of the Appeal Panel is binding on all parties. Appeals should be made directly to the Local Authority who manage all College appeals. Details of how to appeal will be included in decision letters. The timetable for an appeal can be found at the Somerset County Council website: [http://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-learning-and-schools/choosingaschool/appealschool-admissions-decision/](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-learning-and-schools/choosingaschool/appealschool-admissions-decision/)

**Children from Overseas**
The Governing Body will only allocate a place to anyone moving into the country from abroad if they have documentary evidence of a home address and copies of the passport and/or visa if required. The only exceptions are children of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants (including Diplomats) returning to the area.
Withdrawal of Places
The Governing Body will consider withdrawing the offer of a place if;
• The place has been offered on the basis of an application which is subsequently found to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading.
• The parent/carer has not responded to the offer within a reasonable period of time and a further opportunity has been given for the parent to respond within 10 days having explained that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not.
• A child has not started at the school within 21 days of an agreed in-year admission start date.

Children of UK Service Personnel
The Admissions Authority endeavour to ensure that their admission arrangements support the Government’s commitment to removing disadvantages for service children. In-year applications are usually considered for admission up to a maximum of half a term in advance of the place being taken up. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel and other Crown servants where a place can be made available up to a year in advance of being required providing the appropriate documentation is provided (an official government letter (eg MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended address).

Usually, an in-year place may be allocated prior to actual residency, only on receipt of exchange of contracts or a formal signed rental agreement. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel and other Crown servants. This means that, providing the application is accompanied by an official government letter (eg MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended address, the admissions authority will process the application on that address. If a home address is not available at this stage the admissions authority will accept a unit postal address or quartering area address.

If the parent/carer is moving to the area as a result of leaving the armed forces then no special consideration will be given to the application under the grounds of the application being made by a service family.