

ADMISSIONS POLICY

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| Date of Policy | November 2025 |
| | Admissions for September 2027 |
| Staff Responsible | Headteacher |
| Reference | Staff shared area/school policies |
| School/Governor Policy | Governor, Statutory |

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the school
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [School Admissions Code 2021](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#). This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

Looked after children are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order
- Children who were previously in care outside England. This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

4. How to apply

The Local Authority co-ordinates school admissions for all state schools for Year 6 to Year 7 transfer using an equal ranking system. They can be contacted on 01452 425407.

The Local Authority maintains a waiting list system on primary/secondary transfer on behalf of the school until the Summer term, at which point the list is transferred to the school. The school retain this list for twelve months. Parents will need to reapply should they wish to remain on the list for the following academic year.

- Parents will need to complete a Gloucestershire Common Application Form to include any state schools. Only one form may be completed for each child.

- Only the Local Authority can offer school places and each child will only be offered one place. Parents who approach the school requiring information regarding the transfer process during the academic year preceding entry will be directed to the Local Authority Admissions Department.
- Places are allocated on an equal ranking system according to the published admissions criteria. If a place can be offered at more than one school, the Admissions Office will allocate a place at the highest preference school indicated on the Common Application Form
- All places will be offered by the Local Authority on 1st March before the start of the new school year. At this point parents/carers are asked to accept or decline the place offered and the Appeal process takes place (please see below)

Severn Vale School offers an Open Evening and tours for prospective parents and students during the first term of each new academic year. The dates of these events are published on the school website, available from primary schools and published on the GCC website www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions.

5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Children are educated in school with others of their age group. However, parents may request that their child is exceptionally admitted outside their age group. The School will decide whether or not the individual child's circumstances make this appropriate, taking into account the child's individual needs and abilities and considering which year group these needs can best be met. Such requests will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances.

Teachers are skilled at differentiating the curriculum to meet a diverse range of needs. Before deciding to apply to submit a request, parents should visit the school. The Headteacher will be able to explain the provision on offer to children in the year of entry, how it is tailored to meet the needs of all students and how the needs of these students will continue to be met as they move up through the school. They may also be able to allay any concerns the parent may have.

Decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely and the Headteacher's views.

All requests should include recent professional evidence of the child's circumstances which make education outside the age group necessary. Evidence must be of the individual child's need, rather than general factors which relate to a wider group of children born at a similar time.

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

6. Allocation of places

6.1 Admission numbers

Severn Vale is a fully comprehensive school. Places are available for students aged between 11 - 16 years of all abilities, races, religions and physical abilities (who are deemed able to attend mainstream school). The school has an agreed admission number of 265 students for entry in year 7.

6.2 Oversubscription Criteria

Where applications for admission exceed the number of places available, the following criteria will be applied, in the order set out below, to decide which children to admit both during the county co-ordinated process for Year 6 students and for students wishing to be placed on a waiting list for a year group which is at capacity.

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plans name the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated. Children who have an EHC Plan are placed in schools through the arrangements set out in the SEN Code of Practice and not through any admission criteria. Governing bodies are required by Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 to admit a child with an EHC plan that names the school, even if the school is full. Parents of children with an EHC plan should contact their child's casework officer for any further information.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order until all places are filled.

1. A 'looked after child' (Note 1) or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption (Note 2) child arrangements order (residency order) (Note 3) or special guardianship order (Note 4) including those who appear to the admission authority to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
(Note 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) at the time of making an application to a school. In Gloucestershire, such children are referred to as Children in Care.
(Note 2) This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).
(Note 3) Under the provisions of s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014
(Note 4) See Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).
(Note 5) A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.
2. Children living in the priority catchment area normally served by the school, who will have siblings attending the school at the time the applicant child is admitted.
The catchment area for the school is: Arlingham, Brookthorp with Whaddon, Elmore, Frampton on Severn, Fretherne with Saul, Hardwicke, Harescombe, Haresfield, Longney, Morton Valence, Quedgeley, Whitminster
3. Children of staff who are employed by the school.
 - a) Where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
 - b) The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

4. Children for whom only one particular school is appropriate due to an exceptional medical condition. Applications under this criterion will only be considered if they are supported by a written statement from the child's doctor. This must demonstrate that there is a very specific connection between the medical need and the facilities or resources of the school concerned.
5. Children living in the priority catchment area for the school (see above)
6. Children who live outside the priority catchment area normally served by the school, who will have siblings attending the school at the time the applicant child is admitted.
7. Other children with the strongest geographical claim, measured in a straight line from the ordnance survey point of the child's home address (including flats) to the ordnance survey point of the school, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

Please note that a "sibling" is defined in these arrangements as a child who lives as a brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers, stepsisters and foster brothers or sisters.

6.3 Tie break

In cases where there is a tie-break under category 7, random allocation will be used to decide who is awarded a place at the school if the distance between the two children's homes and the school is exactly the same. This process will be verified independently.

6.4 Challenging behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that isn't the normal point of entry, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to looked after children, previously looked after children and children with EHC plans listing the school.

6.5 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Gloucestershire Local Authority Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

7. In-year admissions

Parents can apply for a place for their child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC plans name the school will be admitted.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.3 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Parents of students wishing to transfer to Severn Vale School during the academic year should complete the Common Application Form for In-Year Admissions which can be found on <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/transfersecondaryschool>

The completed Common Application Form for in-year admissions should be sent to lhart@severnvaeschool.com. Parents will be notified of the outcome of their in-year application in writing within 15 school days of receipt of the application.

If the application is successful, parents will be contacted to make arrangements to admit the child. If the application is unsuccessful, a letter will be sent to parents advising them of their next steps which will include making contact with the Co-ordinated Admissions Team at Shire Hall on 01452 425407 and advice about lodging an appeal.

Once a student has been allocated a place at Severn Vale, the school will contact the current school of the student awaiting a place and request information regarding academic ability and pastoral information such as behaviour records, sporting achievements, information, any special educational needs etc.

Once this information has been acquired, the student and their parents will be invited into school for a meeting with the Head of Year to assess their needs following transfer and to outline school expectations and procedures to the student and parents.

At this point, the school requires parents to complete official documentation authorising the transfer including a home/school agreement. Parents are also given a parent booklet and a prospectus at the welcome meeting. A start date will be given to the parent and a tutor group will be allocated to the student.

Every student will be assessed based on information provided by their previous school and parents and will follow the school induction process for in-year admission students.

8. Appeals

8.1 In-Year Admission Appeals

Parents whose application for a place for their child/children at Severn Vale School other than through the normal admission round has been unsuccessful are entitled to have their case for admission heard by an Independent Appeals Panel.

Parents who wish to appeal for a place for their child at Severn Vale School can lodge their appeal by contacting the Admissions Officer at Severn Vale School on 01452 720458, who will send out the relevant paperwork which should then be returned preferably within 20 school days of receipt. Appellants will be informed of the time and date of their hearing by Democratic Services, Gloucestershire County Council prior to the Appeal Panel sitting.

8.2 Year 6 Appeals

Parents whose applications for a place at Severn Vale School through the normal round of admissions have been unsuccessful are also entitled to have their case for admission heard by an Independent Appeals Panel.

Parents who wish to appeal for a place for their child at Severn Vale School following allocation day can lodge their appeal by contacting the Admissions Officer at Severn Vale School on 01452 720458, who will send out the relevant paperwork which should then be returned to the school.

By law, all Year 6 appeals have to be heard by the same appeal panel on the same day within 40 days of the deadline for lodging appeals. Severn Vale School, therefore, hears all Year 6 appeals during Term 6 of each academic year.

If an appellant feels that, following an unsuccessful appeal, there is new or additional information to present which was not available during the original appeal, they may formally request that the Governing Body of the school consider their case for a new appeal. Governors will only grant this right if there is new information to present which was not available at the time of the original appeal.

9. Protocol for Students Transferring away from Severn Vale School:

The following procedure is followed for all students transferring away from Severn Vale School:

1. Parents contact school either by telephone or by writing indicating their intention to move their child outlining the reasons.
2. If there are reasons for the move which the school feels it can resolve, the appropriate members of staff will intervene
3. If the move is straightforward (move of house, area etc) or the reasons for a move are irreconcilable, then parents are asked to confirm in writing if they have not done so already.
4. The most appropriate person (usually Head of Year or member of SLT responsible for the year group) contacts the receiving school to give information about that child. Academic information will also be sent to the receiving school, in line with the school's Data Protection policy.
5. Students are only then taken off roll once we have confirmation that they have started at another school/college when the UPN number is transferred. This is in accordance with Section 11 of the Children Act 2004. Students for whom we have not had contact from another school/college are referred to the education welfare service for action as an absentee.

10. Children of Service Personnel

Children of service personnel. Severn Vale School will consider going over our recommended roll number for children where one or both parents are serving members of the armed forces. This is at the discretion of the school and all applications will be considered in the context of the number of students on roll in the relevant year group and the associated health and safety considerations of admitting further students to that year group.

11. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Governing Board annually. Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the governing board will publicly consult on these changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.