

ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR STOCKINGFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

The admission criteria in order of priority are:

1. Children living in the priority area who have a brother or sister at the school at the time of admission.
2. Children living in the priority area who have a brother or sister at the partner junior school at the time of admission.
3. Children from outside the priority area who have a brother or sister at the school at the time of admission.
4. Children from outside the priority area who have a brother or sister at the partner school at the time of admission.
5. Other children from outside the priority area.

In each category, decision are based on the distance between home and school by the shortest walking route, with priority going to those living nearest the school. This applies equally to those living inside and outside the county.

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SPEECH AND LANGUAGE RESOURCE BASE

The school has 10 additional places above its standard number for children identified by the L.E.A. as having speech/language needs in the Northern Area of the County.

SPECIAL NEEDS

A small number of children admitted to our school may have difficulties which require some additional support e.g. physical difficulties, learning difficulties. The great majority of such children are able to be educated in mainstream schools. This school follows County Guidelines and does not restrict entry on the grounds that a child may need additional support if we feel that it is possible for the school to meet the child's needs successfully.

Parents who are concerned that their child may have special educational needs should speak to the Head teacher, who will be able to advise them or put them in touch with an appropriate professional within the County.

Standard Admissions Numbers

Our school currently has a minimum number of places in each year group of 120.

Even if one year group has risen beyond the standard number neither the school nor the L.E.A. can refuse places in another year group to offset or balance the total numbers.

FIRST ADMISSIONS (4+)

When parents first apply to Stockingford Primary School, they are instructed to contact Warwickshire County Council as they control all admissions to schools.

Statutory School Age

The law requires that children should receive full time education, suited to their age, aptitude, ability and special needs, from the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday.

In Warwickshire, children are usually admitted at the beginning of the academic year in which they will be five.

The Offer

Offers are sent to parents by Warwickshire County Council.

Parents refused places are informed that they have a right of appeal.

The Appeals Process

Admission appeals for County and Controlled Schools are made to the Education Authority. Anyone wishing to appeal should contact the Admissions Service at the County Education Office. The Clerk of the Council will set up an independent appeals committee and make arrangements for hearings.

Appeals committees will normally consist of three members, including a County Councillor (not from the area concerned), a teacher governor or parent governor (not from any of the schools involved) and a lay member. A solicitor is present to keep a record of the proceedings and to advise the committee on the legal process. The parents and an education officer appear in front of the committee together.

The appeal is divided into two parts. At the first stage a decision is made about whether or not the admission or admissions would be prejudicial to the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources in the school.

Individual child or family circumstances are not discussed at this point. The officer will present details about pupil numbers, class organisation, accommodation, staffing and finance.

Once questions on these matters have been dealt with, the officer and the parents leave the room while the committee decides whether prejudice would arise if the school admitted the children concerned.

Where there is more than one appeal for a particular year group, all the parents will usually be invited to the same hearing and they will be together for the first stage - the decision on prejudice. (Their individual cases in stage two are heard separately with no other parents presents.)

If the committee finds that prejudice would not arise, the child or children must be admitted to the school and the hearing goes no further.

If the committee finds prejudice, the hearing proceeds to a second stage when parents set out the reasons why they want a place at the school for their child. They might talk about proximity, practical convenience, the ethos of the school, learning opportunities being different etc. The committee will ask the parent and the officer questions about the issues raised and the officer will also make appropriate comments. Once this stage is complete, the committee will go into private session and reach a decision on each individual case.

The Committee will grant individual appeals if it is believed that the circumstances presented by the parents outweigh the degree of prejudice established in the first stage of the hearing. Stage two decisions are usually made by the committee on the same evening and are conveyed in writing to parents by the Clerk of the Council (and by telephone if the parents contact the Admissions Service the next day). Head teachers will be informed by telephone the day after the hearing.

Committee decisions are binding and there is no appeal by the school or the Authority against decisions to grant a child a place.

Admission appeals for Aided, Special Agreement and Grant Maintained Schools are made direct to the School. The Governing Body has responsibility for appointing an independent appeals committee. The process is similar to the above.

Admissions at other times

If the number in the appropriate **year group** is lower than the standard number, a late applicant must be offered a place. Where there is no vacancy in the year group, the Head teacher can refuse admission - even where the child is living within the school's priority area. The school discusses the situation with the Admissions Service. Parents have the same right of appeal against the decision to refuse a place at the school.

Primary to Junior School Transfers

Parents should receive copies of the booklet "Going to Primary School in the Nuneaton and Bedworth Area."

The Greenwich Judgement

The court ruling known as the "Greenwich Judgement" prevents those responsible for admissions refusing places to children simply because they live outside the administrative County. Following the Judgement, children living an equal distance from a school have to be treated equally, whether they are resident inside or outside Warwickshire. It does not prevent schools giving a higher priority to children living within their priority area.

Under Age Admissions to Reception Classes

Warwickshire's admissions policy allows children to enter school ahead of statutory school age. Schools are not resourced to take even younger children and if any such pupils are admitted, they can only be counted against the standard admission number for the age

appropriate year group. Cases which appear **exceptional** should be discussed with the Admissions Service before any decisions are made.

"Education Otherwise"

The Education Act 1944 (Sections 36 and 37) requires L.E.A.'s to ensure that parents carry out their duty to arrange for their children to receive efficient full-time education suited to age, aptitude, ability and special educational needs. Most parents fulfill their duty by placing their children in school.

If parents choose to make alternative arrangements, they must write to the Senior Inspector at the County Education Office giving details of the planned programme of work. There is a leaflet "You Wish to Educate Your Child Outside the School System?" which gives more detailed information for parents. Copies are available from the Admissions Service.