

TKS Admissions Policy & Procedures

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out the policy and procedures for the admission of pupils to The King's School, Witney. This policy aims to ensure a clear, transparent procedure for staff and prospective parents/carers.

2. School Pupil Numbers

The King's School has an approved capacity of 250 pupils on site at any one time.

3. A Christian School

The King's School welcomes applications from anyone who supports our Christian aims and values. These values are available on the school's website. As a Christian school, we expect prospective families to support the Christian ethos. While many parents actively participate in their local church (and we ask for a reference from a church leader where possible), church attendance is not mandatory for a successful application.

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4. A Non-Selective School

The school is not academically selective as pupils do not need to pass an entrance exam to gain admission. However, given the size and resources available, the school cannot always meet every child's educational needs, as all children are unique.

Where a prospective pupil's educational, emotional, physical, or behavioural needs might exceed the school's resources, the Principal reserves the right to assess suitability for admission or progression. This decision will be made in consultation with relevant staff, Governors, and the prospective parents. To facilitate this decision, additional information may be requested from the child's current teachers.

5. Equality

All candidates for admission will be treated equally, irrespective of any protected characteristics of the pupil or their parents.

6. Child Student Visas

The School is not a Licensed Child Sponsor. Therefore, we cannot consider applications requiring educational visa sponsorship (formally Teir 4 visa).

7. When Pupils Join The School

Many pupils join at or before Reception and progress through the entire school. However, we also welcome applications at different stages as year groups expand. Applications are considered at any stage, though we only consider applications after Christmas of Year 9 in exceptional circumstances, as pupils will have already started the GCSE syllabus by this point.

Pupils will be enrolled in the appropriate year group for their age, unless the Principal determines exceptional circumstances warrant an alternative placement. Such decisions remain entirely at the school's discretion.

New pupils typically join at the start of the academic year in September. The Principal may approve mid-year admissions at the start of a full term where a September start date is not possible.

8. Application Process and Dates

Interested parents/carers should contact our Registrar (registrar@tkswitney.org.uk) who will guide you through the application process.

Applications for Reception class or above for September entry should be submitted by 15th January of that year. After this deadline, all applications are processed according to our admissions criteria.

For applications for pupils wanting to join in future years, we will review applications in the 15th January prior to the desired September start, when they will be processed alongside all other applications for that intake.

Late applications (after 15th January) will be considered if places remain available in the specific year group, subject to our admissions criteria.

9. Admissions Criteria for Priority of Allocating Places

Our relatively small class sizes are a strength of the school, offering individualized attention and strong pastoral care. The Principal, in conjunction with the Governors and Senior Leadership Team, determines the maximum number of pupils for each year group based on:

- Legal site capacity
- Available resources
- Staffing levels
- Physical space
- Educational best practices

More places may become available as a class progresses through the school.

When applications exceed available places in a particular year group, we prioritise places according to the following criteria:

- a. Siblings of current pupils
- b. Children of school staff
- c. Children from families who are active, committed members of Oxfordshire Community Churches (church leader reference required)
- d. Children from families who are active, committed members of other Christian churches (church leader reference required)
- e. Children who are currently in our Nursery
- f. All other applicants who align with the school's ethos

Where multiple applicants meet the same criteria, priority goes to those who have been on the waiting list longest.

10. Interviews

Families applying for their first child to join Reception or above will participate in a parent interview. Children of Secondary age will also be interviewed alongside their parents as an opportunity to be part of the decision-making process. The interview will be conducted by either the child's prospective class teacher or Head of School. To reflect the importance of our spiritual ethos, a representative of Oxfordshire Community Churches or a school Governor will also attend.

The interview provides an opportunity for both parents and staff to ask questions and clarify mutual expectations.

Subsequent children from the same family may not require an interview, though this remains at the Principal's discretion.

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11. The Decision

Acceptance decisions are made by the school representatives who conduct the interview. The interview panel will consist of a member of the Senior Leadership Team, and a Pastor from Oxfordshire Community Churches or a Governor. The decision considers:

- The child's desire to attend a Christian school (where age-appropriate)
- The parents' and prospective pupil's agreement with the school's Christian values and understanding of our culture
- The school's capacity to meet the child's needs
- Prayerful consideration

12. Progression from Primary to Secondary

Most pupils automatically progress to the Secondary school and there is no need to reapply at this stage. However, when a pupil's needs may exceed secondary school resources, a careful assessment will be conducted.

This consideration process begins internally at the end of Year 4. Parents will be engaged in discussions during the first term of Year 5 if any concerns arise regarding potential Year 7 entry. Where progression to Secondary is uncertain, parents will receive guidance on exploring alternative options from the first term of Year 5.

Applications for government funding or alternative school placements should be initiated by parents by March of the Year 5 academic year if concerns persist.

If the school cannot offer a Year 7 place, this will be communicated to parents by the start of the Autumn Term of Year 6, allowing maximum time for improvement or support arrangements. Any appeals should be completed by the end of February in Year 6, before state school offers begin in March.

13. Special Educational Needs and Disability

While we strive to support as many pupils as possible, we cannot meet every pupil's educational and health needs.

Parents/carers must disclose any known or suspected health issues, developmental concerns, allergies, disabilities, and learning difficulties during the application process. All professional reports and assessments must be shared with the school. The school reserves the right to withdraw a place if information is withheld or incomplete.

We carefully consider the existing needs within a class to determine if we can effectively accommodate additional requirements. In some cases, we may need to decline an application. The school does not have resources to provide dedicated one-to-one support for pupils with SEND needs.

If we become aware of a disability or special educational need in an existing pupil, we will make reasonable adjustments, within the capacity of available resources, to support them while at the school.

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If, in the professional judgment of the Principal and relevant staff, the school cannot adequately meet a pupil's physical, educational, or behavioural needs, despite reasonable adjustments, or if doing so significantly affects the progress and well-being of others, parents will be asked to withdraw the pupil. Fees will not be charged in lieu of notice. The school will offer reasonable support to help parents find a suitable alternative placement.

14. English as an Additional Language

The school has many pupils with English as an additional language (EAL). However, we lack resources for one-to-one support for pupils with EAL. If English proficiency is a concern, the school may require an English assessment during the application process to determine whether we can meet the applicant's needs.

15. Summary of Process for Admission to Reception to Year 11

1. Parent/carer makes initial contact with Registrar through website, phone, or in person
2. Parent/carer visits the school at an open morning or individual visit
3. Parent/carer completes application form, submits latest school report, and pays £90 (incl. VAT) registration fee per applicant
4. Registrar obtains references from church and school (school reference may be requested before application if SEN support may be needed)
5. Taster day followed by teacher/SENCO and pupil feedback
6. Family interview (if applicable)
7. Offer made within one week of annual application panel meeting or interview (for later applications). More complex cases may require additional consideration
8. Parent/carer pays deposit to hold place - one month's fees, refundable at the end of the first full year
9. Parents/carers complete Pupil Information Forms, complete paper Direct Debit Form and present passport/birth certificate to copy

16. Exceptional Admissions

Where space permits, the school welcomes emergency applications from families on or returning from Christian mission abroad (e.g. temporary furlough or emergency situations). In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may approve exceeding the pre-approved class capacity, though the school cannot exceed its total approved capacity of 250 pupils.

Families temporarily relocating may need to pay full fees to reserve places where the class is at or near capacity; we cannot guarantee space availability upon return otherwise.

17. Financial Assistance

Oxfordshire Community Churches offers a limited bursary for its members to enable their children to attend the school. Enquiries should be directed to the Bursar.

No school bursary is available for new applicants. However, existing families facing unexpected financial hardship may apply for limited assistance through the Bursar.

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18. Appeals

Parents/carers who believe they have not been treated in accordance with this or any other school policy may formally complain to the Principal and/or Governors following our Complaints Policy.

19. Leaving TKS

Pupils typically leave the school at the end of Year 11. For earlier departures, parents/carers must inform the Registrar in writing as soon as possible.

When parents/carers notify the school between September and June of their intention to withdraw a pupil, the two following months' Direct Debit payments will remain due after the notification date. The pupil may continue attending during this period. When a pupil remains in school after 30th June, the full 12 months' payments are payable regardless of when notification was given.

20. Process for Admissions to Nursery

1. Parent/carer makes initial contact with Registrar through website, phone, or in person
2. Parent/carer visits the school at an open morning or individual visit
3. Parent/carer completes application form and submits latest school report if the child has attended another setting
4. Children are typically enrolled the term or half-term after turning three, depending on session availability (see Early Years Fees Policy)
5. Most families are entitled to 15 hours government funded childcare and some are eligible for additional hours with proper documentation (eligibility code, parents' National Insurance Numbers, child's birth date and identification). For additional hours, parents must re-confirm eligibility every three months, and changes in circumstances must be reported through the Government Childcare Portal
6. Registrar confirms joining date and sessions with parents/carers
7. Child attends a short taster session, ideally at the end of the term before starting

During the autumn term of your child's final Nursery year, you will be invited to a school open day and/or tour of the main school.

Some apply for Reception when joining Nursery but if not, applications for Reception should be submitted by 15th January of the year in which your child requires a September place. All applications will be processed alongside other applications according to our standard school admissions criteria.

****Please note: Nursery attendance does not guarantee a space in Reception; applications will be processed alongside all others according to our standard admissions criteria.****