



# **The Forest CE Federation**

**'Small enough to care. Large enough to inspire  
Valuing all God's children'**

*All things are possible for one who believes' Mark 9 v 23*

## **The Forest CE Federation**

### **Admissions Policy VC Schools**

**For academic year 2025 - 2026**

**Date Reviewed: July 2024**

**Next Review: July 2025**



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## The Forest CE Federation Admissions Policy Voluntary Controlled Schools

Admission arrangements for academic year September 2025 – August 2026

### Introduction

The governing body of The Forest CE Federation applies the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend our schools. This policy conforms to the regulations that are set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 2000 alongside the School Admissions Code 2021.

### Aims and objectives

We are an inclusive Federation of Schools that welcomes children from all backgrounds and abilities. All applications will be treated on merit and in a sensitive manner. The only restriction we place on entry is that of number. If the number of children applying for entry exceeds the places available, we enforce the procedure set out below in order to determine whether the child is accepted or not. It is our wish to allow parents the right to have a place at our schools of their choice. However, this is not always possible, due to the excess demand on the school places available.

The level of ability of a child or any special needs that s/he may have plays no part in the admissions policy of our federation.

### Admission Procedure

Admissions are made via West Northamptonshire County Council. Applications can be made on-line by accessing the link below:

<https://www.westnorthants.gov.uk/school-admissions>

The Published Pan Number (PAN) for the Reception year of entry is:

Whittlebury – 12  
Stoke Bruerne – 12  
Gayton – 12  
Yardley Gobion – 20

The federation will admit children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) which names the schools within the federation.

### Oversubscription criteria

When there are more applications than there are places available, children will be admitted according to the following criteria, which are listed in order of priority:

1. Looked after children and all previously looked after children (see definition below);
2. Children who live in the linked area for the school:



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Whittlebury – Whittlebury

Gayton – Gayton

Stoke Bruerne – Shutlanger & Stoke Bruerne

Yardley Gobion – Grafton Regis & Yardley Gobion

3. Children with a sibling (see definition below) continuing at the school at the time of admission of the child;
4. Other children.

## Allocation of places up to Published Admission Number (PAN)

If the PAN is exceeded within any criterion, priority will be given to applicants whose home address is closest to the school.

## Tiebreaker

Where two or more applications cannot otherwise be separated, random allocation will be used to decide who is allocated a place.

## Definitions

### *Looked after children (LAC)*

A 'looked after child' is a child who, at the time of making an application to a school, is:

- a) In the care of a local authority, or
- b) Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989)

### *Previously looked after children (PLAC)*

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

- a) were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) or the Adoption and Childcare Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders), or
- b) became a subject to a child arrangements order (as defined in Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and as amended by Section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014), or
- c) became subject to a special guardianship order (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).

This includes children 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. 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.

## Sibling

A sibling is defined as a child's brother or sister. A sibling must be living at the same permanent address and as part of the same family unit (one or two parents plus children) to qualify for a sibling link. For School Admissions purposes, the term sibling includes:

- half -brothers and half-sisters
- step-brothers and step-sisters
- adopted children



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- children in foster care
- children living in the same family unit, even if they are not biological brothers and sisters – for example when the parents are not married/in a civil relationship.

Cousins are not regarded as siblings.

## Home Address (child's)

The child's home address is defined as the address at which the child normally resides with their parent/carer on the closing date for applications.

When we refer to a child's home address, we mean the permanent residence of the child. This address should be the child's only or main residence which is;

- owned by the child's parents/carers, or
- leased to or rented by the child's parents/carers under a lease or written rental agreement of not less than six months' duration.

When parents live separately and the child spends most time with each parent, the home address will be treated as the place where the child sleeps for most of the school week (i.e., Sunday night – Thursday night inclusive).

If the child spends equal amounts of time at two addresses, the parents must agree which address they wish to be the child's main address.

Places cannot be allocated on the basis of an intended future change of address unless house moves have been confirmed through the exchange of contracts or signing of a formal lease.

Documentary evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property concerned.

## Multiple Birth Groups

In the case of twins or other siblings from a multiple birth, if the last child to be admitted to a particular school is from a multiple birth group, all other children in the group will be offered places at the school, even if it means exceeding the Published Admission Number.

In the case of siblings in the same year group, where there is only one place remaining, places will be allocated over the published admission number to accommodate all siblings unless this would make the class too large and prejudice the education of the other children or when this would breach infant class size limits.

## Distance Measurements

Distances are measured on a straight-line basis from the address point of the child's home to the address point of the school, using a geographical information system. Each address has a unique address point established by the most valuable elements from the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NPLG), Ordnance Survey Master Map, Royal Mail Postal Address File and The Valuation Office Agency. The address point for a property does not change.

In the case where there are multiple applications from the shared dwelling (e.g., flats) or where the distance between two or more children's homes to the school (using the system referred to above) is identical, random allocation using an online computerised randomiser will be used to decide which child gets priority. Random allocation will be carried out by someone independent of the school.



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## **Children below Compulsory School Age**

Where children below compulsory school age are offered a place at the school, they will be entitled to attend the school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday.

Parents/carers may defer their child's entry to the allocated school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made when the place will cease to be available for the child.

Where parents/carers wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

## **Admission outside the normal age group**

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of the normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1.

## **Requests for admission to reception outside the normal age group (summer born children)**

All children are entitled to a full-time school place in September following their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday and most parents are happy for their child to start school at this point. However, parents/carers of summer born children (those born between 1 April and 31 August) who do not reach compulsory school age until a full year after they would normally start school, may wish to delay their child's start to school until the September following the child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday.

If parents wish to delay their summer born child's start at school until the September after their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, there are two options:

1. Parents can make an in-year application for a year 1 place for the September following their child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday as other children in the child's age group already attending school will be moving from reception to year 1 at this point. It is important to remember that some schools are likely to be full in year 1 and unable to offer a place.
2. If parents do not want their child to miss their reception year, they may request that their child is admitted out of their normal age group i.e., into reception instead of year 1. Please note, this is a 'request' and parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group. The school's admission authority is responsible for making the decision about which year group a child should be admitted to.

Parents/carers of summer born children who wish to delay their child's start by a full year but would like them to start in Reception, should still make their application for a Reception place for their child's normal year of entry before the primary application deadline in the offer year (the academic year in which the child turns 4). If a delay is agreed, this application can be withdrawn.

Parents/carers requests to apply for a reception place at a school for the September following their child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday should be made in writing to [admissions@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@westnorthants.gov.uk) In their request, parents/carers should identify which school they would like to make their request for and provide



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some information about their child to explain why they think that their child should be educated out of their normal age group and start school in reception rather than year 1.

This request will then be considered by WNC who have to decide on the appropriate year group for the child. Parents/carers will then be informed in writing of WNC's decision.

## **General requests for admission outside the normal age group**

Parents/carers wishing to seek a place for their child out of their normal age group at a school for any other year group than reception, or for reception after the start of the new school year in September, must put their request in writing to [admissions@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@westnorthants.gov.uk) giving reasons why they are requesting a place out of the normal age group and supplying evidence they feel is relevant as well as submitting an in-year application to the local authority.

The LA (WNC), as the admissions authority of the school, will consider the request and make a decision on the appropriate year group for the child on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interest of the child. WNC will inform the parents in writing of their decision. Parents and carers do not have the right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

## **Late Applications**

Late applications are any common application forms (for the normal point of entry) received by the local authority after its statutory deadline. Late applications will not receive an offer of a place on National Offer Day. Late applications will be processed in the subsequent rounds of allocations between May and July.

## **Waiting Lists**

Following an unsuccessful application, parents/carers can request that their child's name be placed on a waiting list. Waiting lists are held by the LA and each child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the school's published oversubscription criteria. Priority will not be given to children who have been on the waiting list the longest. Waiting lists will be held until 31 December. If a parent/carer wishes for their child to remain on the waiting list for the remainder of the school year they must inform the School Admission team in writing.

## **Appeals**

If a parent/carer's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, they will be informed why admission was refused and have the right to appeal against the decision not to offer their child a place at the school.

Parents or carers wishing to appeal against the decision not to offer a place should complete the online appeal form on the WNC website. Please visit the Appeals page for more information.