

Admissions policy

2024-2025



Churchdown School Academy
ACHIEVING SUCCESS FOR ALL

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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

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

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in). You can use this form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order.

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' 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
- The headteacher's views

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 number

The school has an agreed admission number of 250 pupils for entry in Year 7 in September 2024.

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plans name the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

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. Highest priority will be given to looked-after children and all previously looked-after children who apply for a place at the school (see section 3 above)
2. Priority will next be given to children with siblings at the school. Siblings include step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address. Priority will not be given to children with siblings who are former pupils of the school.

3. Priority will next be given to 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 front gate of the school, using the local authority's computerized measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

6.3 Tie break

In the case of 2 or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined in 3 above (strongest geographical claim), the school will use random allocation as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. This process will be followed by the governing board.

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 County Council's 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 1 of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.2 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions are available on the school website and once completed should be sent to the following address:

Mrs J Walsh
PA to Headteacher
Churchdown School
Winston Road
Churchdown
Gloucester
GL3 2RB

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their in-year application in writing within 15 school days.

8. Appeals

If your child's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals. If you wish to appeal, please

contact school@churchdownschool.com for the appropriate appeal papers and guidelines. You must set out the grounds for your appeal in writing and send it to school@churchdownschool.com or the postal address above.

9. Sixth Form admissions policy

9.1 Aims

Churchdown School's mission is to be a school where student development and learning are at the centre of everything we do. Students are expected to strive for personal excellence and demonstrate a commitment to learning as they fulfil their potential. Our community is a nurturing and caring one, where students are encouraged to show compassion, friendship and support towards one another. We aim to provide an education which is fully inclusive, where every child is valued for who they are and who they can become.

At Churchdown School the education we provide is guided by the values of integrity, resilience, respect, ambition and tolerance. These values are particularly important to us as we develop the students into lifelong learners and prepare them for a life beyond school.

Churchdown School provides a high quality of education for students with a wide variety of interests, aptitudes and abilities. In considering applications, our aim is to accept students on to courses where they can be successful and fulfil their potential.

We offer a range of Level 3 courses and, for students who narrowly miss out on achieving grade 4 in GCSE English or Mathematics, we offer GCSE resit classes in both English and Mathematics.

Students will be admitted to begin Sixth Form courses at age 16 (on 1st September of the year of entry) without reference to catchment area. In all cases, successful entry to Sixth Form at Churchdown School is based on the academic entry requirements stated in this policy.

As an Academy, school admissions are the responsibility of the school governors. Our Sixth Form admissions procedures are administered by the Sixth Form leadership team and administrator, but the final responsibility for deciding admissions criteria rests with the governing board.

9.2 Method of application

Prospectuses and application forms are published during the spring term each year and are available to all. They are specifically issued:

- to all students in Year 11 of Churchdown School
- to visitors to the Sixth Form Information Evening held in the autumn term
- on request, often as a result of our publicity in the local press
- at Information Evenings held at neighbouring 11-16 schools.

They are also available on the Sixth Form section of the school website.

At any time of year, a tour of the school and conversation with the Head of Sixth Form can be organised. An Induction Day will take place in late June / early July to help students orientate themselves to their new surroundings and courses.

'Information, advice and guidance' meetings are set up for every prospective sixth former with their parents/carers to provide expert professional support at a critical time of decision. Internal students will be asked to make their provisional choices by a date in December in order to help us construct the curriculum in the spring term. This is when the timetable blocks will be set, in order to cater for as many curriculum choices as we can offer. Students can alter their choices up until the start of their Sixth Form courses, but their options must fit with the timetable blocking that has been set.

For organisational reasons there may be changes made at any time to the subjects offered or their position in the option blocks. Students affected by any such changes will be notified as soon as possible. We will always endeavour to keep any disruption to a minimum and we will offer guidance to try to provide a suitable alternative.

9.3 Academic entry criteria

Entry to Year 12

For Level 3 courses (A Level, or Level 3 Technical qualifications):

- Evidence of a positive, self-motivated approach to learning
- Most A Level courses also have different pathway requirements for entry - these are outlined fully in the prospectus and on the school website each year.

Students who do not have at least grade 4 in both GCSE Mathematics and English Language will be required to resit these subjects as part of their Sixth Form studies. Most students will take three subjects in Year 12. We do allow students occasionally to study four courses, depending on their GCSE grades and individual circumstances. The final decision as to the number of courses a student will start and complete rests with the Head of Sixth Form, to allow for particular exceptional circumstances.

Progression to Year 13

- The normal minimum requirement to progress to the second year of an A Level course is that a student must obtain at least grade D in the relevant qualification. This is reflected through the ISM grades, mock exam grades or AS exam.
- In light of the above, students who have not obtained a minimum of three D grades (or be at merit standard at the midway point in their Level 3 vocational courses) will be required to attend a meeting, on or shortly after A Level Results Day with the Head of Sixth Form to discuss the options available to them, which might include:
 - In exceptional circumstances, re-starting Year 12 on mainly/entirely different courses to those they have previously taken
 - Progression to Year 13 on a combination of their existing courses and one or more new AS level (or equivalent) qualifications
 - Support in finding an apprenticeship, job with training, or alternative provider of post-16 education on courses which suit their aspirations and interests.
- Year 13 students will be expected to complete three Level 3 courses. Students who wish to continue with four Level 3 courses will normally be allowed to do so.

The school retains the right to be flexible when assessing a student's application against these criteria, to allow for personal and exceptional circumstances.

To enroll, all sixth formers must sign the Sixth Form Agreement which sets out what the school will provide for all students and the expectations that the school has of all students, including the requirement to attend all registrations/tutorials, assemblies and enrichment.

All students are expected to apply good effort to their lessons and supervised study sessions. They are expected to embrace the rights and responsibilities that being a member of the senior school involves and take a positive and active part in the life of the school and wider community.

We encourage all eligible students to apply for our "16-19" Bursary.

9.4 Applications from external students

Each year a number of students join our Sixth Form from other schools. Applications are welcomed from such students. The academic entry requirements for courses are identical for external and internal applicants. Our admission number for external applications is 15. This number may be exceeded if demand can be met. Where over-subscribed we will give priority to applicants who apply by the deadline stated on the application form, as follows:

1. Looked after children.
2. Pupils living within the area of prime responsibility of Churchdown School.
3. All other applicants.

In the event of the school being oversubscribed in any of the above criteria, places will be offered to those living nearest the school as measured in a direct line distance from the front door of their home to the front door of the school.

Applications for children for whom only this particular school is appropriate due to an exceptional medical

condition will only be considered if they are supported by a written statement from the child's doctor. This statement must demonstrate that there is a very specific connection between the medical need and the facilities or resources at Churchdown School.

All applicants will be invited to an interview with the Head of Sixth Form or Head of Year to discuss the suitability of the student's preferred options and their current progress and predicted grades. References from current schools will be sought in all cases and offers made on the outcome of the interview and reference.

Applicants refused admission to our Sixth Form are entitled to appeal to a governors' appeals panel. In this event, firstly an applicant should write to the Headteacher requesting a place. If this request is denied, a letter should be written to the Clerk to the Governors which will initiate the formal appeal process.

10. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the governing board every year.

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.