

**St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Portishead**

**Detailed Admissions Policy 2009/10**

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1. **Nature of the School:**

Saint Joseph's Catholic Primary School (St. Joseph's School) is a Voluntary Aided school, which has been established by the Clifton Catholic Diocesan Trustees Registered, to serve the Parish of Saint Joseph's, Portishead. A map of the Parish of St Joseph is available at St. Joseph's School.

2. **Admissions Authority and Additional Information Common to all North Somerset Voluntary Aided Schools:**

The Governing Body of St. Joseph's School, acting in accordance with the Code of Practice (see definitions) and the Clifton Diocesan Policy Statement (see definitions) and in consultation with the Local Authority (LA), is solely responsible for the admission of pupils to the School. As such, it is the Legal Admissions Authority, although the School uses the Local Authority's admission applications processing systems and is part of its coordinated scheme.

In appendix 1 to this policy is Additional Information Common for all LA Voluntary Aided Schools in the LA except for paragraphs b and p which are individual to each school.

3. **Educational Principles:**

Saint Joseph's School is a Catholic School, and the education provided will follow the national curriculum and will also be in compliance with the teachings, doctrines, and principles of the Catholic Church.

4. **Admission Number:**

The Admission Number for Saint Joseph's School is 30.

5. **Admissions Committee:**

The Governors Admissions Committee of St. Joseph's School is a committee of the Full Governing Body and is delegated by it to carry out various roles in applying this admissions policy in so far as they are allowed by the Admissions Code.

6. **Applications to attend St. Joseph's School:**

All applications for places must be made on the North Somerset common application form (or the required information may be provided in a letter). Parents/carers will be able to apply on paper or electronically and will be able to apply online up to the closing time and date only.

Applications must be made by the person who has parental responsibility as the main carer as defined in the Children Act 1989. Parents will be asked to confirm that they are the main carers of the child on their application form.

- a. Shared Parental Responsibility: Where parents/carers share parental responsibility for a child and two applications are received for the one child from his/her parents who reside at different addresses, the LA, on behalf of the Governing Body,

will ask the parents to determine which application it should consider and which application should be withdrawn. This is because the LA, on behalf of the Governing Body, will offer only one school place to a child at any one time.

- b. Disputed Parental Responsibility: If parents cannot agree, they should resolve the issue through the court system. However, in the absence of any Court Order the application received from the parent who receives Child Benefit for the child will be the only one considered. Where proof of Child Benefit is not available the decision as to who should apply will be determined by drawing lots (see definitions).
- c. Applicants: Applications for all school places must only be made and signed by a person with parental responsibility, preferably with whom the child lives. If this is not possible, the person completing the form should send accompanying information explaining the reasons why this requirement cannot be met. Any evidence to support the case should accompany the application form. The LA, on behalf of the Governing Body, will consider the reasons and if deemed acceptable, the application will be processed accordingly. If not deemed acceptable, the application will be returned for the signature of the person with parental responsibility for the child.

#### 7. **Deferred Entry:**

St. Joseph's School's academic year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> August. Normally, children start their schooling, in the academic year in which they reach the age of five, and usually at the beginning of the academic year. However, parents or carers may wish to defer their child's entry to St. Joseph's School until later in the academic year, and in those circumstances the following will apply:

- a. Before the Age of Five: Where a place in St. Joseph's School is offered from a date before a child reaches the compulsory school age of five, the School will offer the parents or carers the option of deferring the child's entry until later in the school year.
- b. Postponement Period: The law specifies that any deferment shall be no longer than the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> term following the child's fifth birthday.
- c. The Holding of a Place: Where the request for a deferment meets these conditions, the school place will be held for that child and will not be offered to another child.
- d. Reaching the Age of Five after the beginning of the Fifth Term: Where a child does not reach the age of five until after the beginning of the fifth term and therefore would not be due to

start until the 1<sup>st</sup> September in the following academic year, the parents or carers WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAKE A FRESH APPLICATION for entry to St. Joseph's School into the academic year beginning in the following September, if they wish to defer their child's entry. Furthermore the application must then be for a Year 1 place not a Reception Class place. This is because the School will only consider admitting the child into its chronological age group and, as a consequence of the deferment, the child will miss the Reception year altogether. Applications for Year 1 entry will be considered from 1<sup>st</sup> July, two months before the child is due to start in the new academic year.

PARENTS OR CARERS CHOOSING THIS OPTION SHOULD BE AWARE that if the number of Reception Year children moving up into Year 1 in the year in question is already at the maximum number permitted by law, there could be no place available for any new children to join Year 1, and it may not be possible for St. Joseph's School to offer a place. It is therefore advisable for children to join the Reception class in the academic year in which they reach the age of five.

**8. Standard Entry:**

Because St Joseph's School's academic year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> August, children in North Somerset may attend the school from the beginning of the academic year before their fifth birthday, if they reach the age of five during the academic year.

**9. Application Procedure:**

- a. Applications Address: Applications for a place at St. Joseph's School should be made on a North Somerset Common Application Form, obtainable from, and to be returned to, The School Admissions Team, Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1ZZ by 4.30pm on Friday 24th October 2008 to be considered in the first round of allocations. For details as to what to do with supporting documentation see 9.d.
- b. On Line Applications: It will be possible to make an application online. An explanation of how to do this is given in the 'Parent's Guide for School Admissions' obtainable from the Schools Admissions Team of the LA. They should be contacted if further help or advice is needed. For details as to what to do with supporting documentation see 9.d.
- c. Proof of Residence: the LA, on behalf of the Governing Body, will ask Parents/carers to provide independent evidence to prove residency at their home address.
  - i. Child's Home Address: For school admission purposes the LA will normally consider the child's home address to be the place where the child permanently and ordinarily

resides for the majority of the time. This would normally be the same address as the person who has parental responsibility for the child as their main carer. It will not include the address of a child that is different from his/her parents/carers where the move to this address is expressly linked to obtaining a school place. Where parent/carers do not live together and the child spends equal amounts of time with both parents/carers, the LA will consider the home of the parent/carer who receives Child Benefit to be the child's home.

- ii. Residency Checks: The LA, on behalf of the Governing Body, will undertake rigorous residency checks and reserves the right to request independent confirmation of the child's place of residence. Parent/carers may be asked to supply such documentation as deemed appropriate by the LA, e.g. a Child Benefit book, may be required. If the child benefit is shared between parents, the address used will be determined by drawing lots (see definitions).
- iii. Proof of Residence: The LA will undertake checks to ensure that an applicant is living at a property. A sample of applicants will be asked to provide documentation to prove that they reside at their home address, for example, copy of a recent gas or electricity bill. Applicants will be required to obtain this documentation and reply within a deadline set by the LA to any request for further information. If this documentation is not provided the application may be withdrawn.
- iv. Moving Home: For those moving house, their applications will be considered from their proposed new address in the first round of allocations if they are able to confirm independently by 4.30 pm on 24th October 2008 that they will be moving to that address before the start of the school year. Examples of independent confirmation are a solicitor's letter confirming the exchanges of contracts with a completion date, or a tenancy agreement signed by both parties.
- v. Proof of Vacation of a Previous Address: Applicants may also be required to provide proof that they have left the previous property, for example a final account utility bill. Proof of residency received after 4.30 pm on 24th October 2008 will normally only be taken into account in any subsequent rounds of school place allocations.

d. Supporting Documentation:

i. Catholic Applicants

Supporting documentation is required for all applicants who are Catholic see over subscription criteria 10a, 10c, 10d, 10e and 10g below. In these categories, for a child to be considered as a Catholic, evidence of Catholic baptism or Reception into the Church will be required. This evidence will normally be in the form of a Certificate of baptism or of Reception into full Communion from the Parish where this took place. Those who may have difficulty in obtaining these for good reason, may still be considered as baptised Catholic but only after they have been referred to their Parish Priest who will decide how the question of baptism is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church. For a definition of a Baptised Catholic see 17 below.

ii. Other Christians living in Saint Joseph's Parish

Supporting documentation is required for Other Christians living in Saint Joseph's Parish. (See over subscription criteria 10h below).

In order to ensure that the Admissions Authority, namely, the Governing Body of St. Joseph's School, is able to consider the application in the appropriate order of precedence, **parents/carers must ensure that the relevant documentary evidence as stated in 9di and 9dii and in 10e and 10h is sent or delivered to the** School to arrive no later than 4.30pm on Friday 24th October 2008 to be considered in the first round of allocations, These items should be sent or delivered to the school office at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Bristol Road, Portishead, Bristol, BS20 6QB **irrespective** of the application method used (i.e. paper documents or on line). The Governors reserve the right to clarify qualifying evidence in support of the application. If the documents are sent or delivered in error to the Local Authority School Admissions Team they will be considered in the first round of allocations provided they are on time.

- e. 'Waiting List' – Unsuccessful Applicants: The Local Authority, on behalf of the governing body, will hold a list of those applicants still seeking a place at the school, until the last day of term 1 in 2009. All applications will be ranked in line with the school's over-subscription criteria and allocations will be made in accordance with it. Priority will not be given on the basis simply of the date an application was added to the list. Children who are the subject of a direction by a Local Authority to admit or who are allocated a school in accordance with an In-Year Fair Access Protocol for school places, will take precedence over

those on the waiting list After the last day of term 1, the list will be discarded. (For further details see appendix 1 x and y)

- f. Non Attendance at the Start date: If children do not commence attendance at school at the start of their agreed first term, and the school is not given a satisfactory reason for the absence, the place may be withdrawn and, if applicable, will be offered to other applicants.
- g. Over-Subscription Criteria: Voluntary Aided schools operate their own over-subscription criteria, which are different from the criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. Saint Joseph's School criteria are shown later in this document.
- h. Co-ordinated Admissions: The Government requires all admission authorities to co-ordinate their admission arrangements, and under the LA's scheme the LA, on behalf of the Governing Body, will collect applications for school places. The LA will notify all applicants of the result of their applications on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2009. The Governors Admission Committee (not the LA) will apply the criteria to determine the order of precedence of applications.
- i. Withdrawal of School Place Offers: Where a place is offered in error, it may be withdrawn. Where parents/carers do not respond to an offer of a place within 21 days, the offer may be withdrawn and the place offered to another applicant.
- j. Preferences: The LA, on behalf of the Governing Body, will be operating an equal preference system. When considering applications for admissions to the school, the Governors Admissions Committee will consider all applications equally regardless of the parents' stated order of preference, known as ranking. Where parents qualify for places at more than one school, they will be offered a place at their highest stated preference, and therefore parents who particularly wish their child to attend St. Joseph's School should make the school their first preference. For further information on this matter see the LA's 'Parents Guide to School Admissions'.

k.

**10. Over-Subscription Criteria:**

The following describes the system to be used by the Governors Admissions Committee in deciding the order of precedence of applications for places in the school during the allocation process and when the School is over subscribed. Parents/carers must note that supporting documentation of faith commitment apply as in 9 d. Places will be offered to applicants in the following order until the admissions number is reached:

- a. Catholic 'Looked After Children' 'Looked After Children' who are baptised Catholics for whom a place is requested by the relevant person/authority.
- b. Non-Catholic Looked After Children: 'Looked After Children' who are non-Catholic for whom a place is requested by the relevant person/authority.
- c. Baptised Catholic Children from within the Parish: Children who live within the boundaries of the Catholic Parish of Saint Joseph's, Portishead and have been baptised into the Catholic Church.
- d. Baptised Catholic Children living outside the Parish with a sibling at the School: Baptised Catholic children who live outside the boundaries of the Catholic Parish of St Joseph's, Portishead, but who will have a sibling (see 'definitions') at the school at the time of their admission.
- e. Baptised Catholic Children Unable to Obtain a Place at Another Catholic School:  
Baptised Catholic children who live outside the boundaries of the Catholic Parish of Saint Joseph's, Portishead, and where a place is not available at the Catholic Primary School serving the Parish in which they live. In these circumstances a letter from the Head Teacher of the Catholic Primary School serving their Parish of residence confirming that there is no place available at that school for the child in question will be required. The school office must receive this and a copy of the child's Certificate of Baptism or the equivalent with the application.
- f. Children with Siblings at the School: For the first round of applications, a sibling must be attending the school at the time of admission as well as at the closing date, 24th October 2008. For all in year applications children who will have a sibling at the school at the time of their admission. (See definitions).
- g. Other Baptised Catholic Children: Baptised Catholic children who live outside the boundaries of the Parish of St Joseph's, Portishead, but who fall outside any of the above criteria.
- h. Other Christian Children from within the Parish:  
In recognition of the diversity of Christian denominations within our community and in striving to offer an opportunity of admission for those Christians, a baptism certificate and/or a letter of support from the minister or equivalent is required.
- i. Other children who live in the Parish of St. Joseph's. Children who do not fall into any of the categories given above, and who live within the boundaries of the Parish of St. Joseph's.

- j. Other Children: Children who do not fall into any of the categories given above.

The 'Over-Subscription - Further Criteria' and information set out below will be applied to all applications where necessary.

#### 11. **Over-Subscription - Further Criteria:**

If applications, within the categories described under 'Over-Subscription Criteria' above, **were to result in over-subscription**, the following additional criteria will be used to rank children in each Over-Subscription Criteria:

- a. Siblings: For the first round of applications, a sibling must be attending the school at the time of admission as well as at the closing date, 24th October 2008. For all in year applications children who will have a sibling at the school at the time of their admission. (See definitions)
- b. Children of Multiple Births: The Governors Admissions Committee of St. Joseph's School will apply a modification to the 'Drawing Lots' procedure described under 'Definitions' to applications in respect of children of multiple births. This is to try and avoid children from the same family (for example twins or triplets) within the same intake year group being offered places at different schools. The Governors have therefore decided that when drawing lots, the names of all the children of a multiple birth will be written on to the same piece of paper and the paper will be copied so that there are as many copies as there are children from the multiple birth. All these copies will then be entered into the draw, which will then proceed as described in the rest of the 'Drawing Lots' definition.

#### 12. **'Tie Breaking' Procedure:**

Where, after applying all the above 'Over-Subscription Criteria', and 'Over-Subscription – Further Criteria', it is still impossible to make distinctions between applicants, the following additional procedures will be carried out as required:

- a. For over-subscription criteria 10a to i:  
Drawing lots (see 'definitions' for the 'drawing of lots' method).
- b. For over-subscription criteria 10 j:  
Children living nearest to the school (see 'definitions' for further details)

#### 13. **Children with Special Educational Needs:**

There is a different procedure for the admission to St. Joseph's School for children with Statements of Special Educational Needs. The LA in whose

area the family lives administers the procedure. Where a school is named in a child's Statement of Special Educational Need, the Governing Body, as the Admissions Authority, is legally required to admit the child to the school. Therefore, such children will be allocated places before any of the foregoing criteria are applied.

**14. Late Applications and Changes of Address or Circumstances:**

Late applications, and changes in family circumstances including a change of address occurring after 4.30pm on Friday 24th October 2008, will not be acted upon until after the first round of place allocations has been fully completed, unless the LA considers there are extenuating reasons.

**15. Place offers refused or not taken up:**

Should places not be taken up or otherwise become available after the first round of allocations, they will be offered, after applying the admissions criteria described above, to those applicants still seeking a place at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School.

**16. 'In Year' Applications for Admission:**

Where applications to fill 'In Year' class vacancies do not exceed the admission number, of 30, the school is legally required to admit the child.

If, at any point in time, the number of 'In Year' applications for a class exceeds the admission number of 30 the Governors Admission Committee in accordance with its terms of reference will meet to decide the names of those who will be offered a place and apply the over subscription criteria given in 10 and 11 above, subject to the following additional constraints:

- a. Infant Classes: As the Admission Number is 30, which is the maximum size allowed in an infant class, known as Infant Class Size Restriction, no child can be admitted by the Governors Admission Committee if that will mean the admission number will be exceeded unless they have been directed to take them by the relevant person/authority because the child either has Special Educational Needs or is a "Looked After Child".
- b. Junior Classes: For junior classes the Governors of Saint Joseph's School may in accordance with the Admissions Code exceed the Admission Number of 30 for the class if in their view there are "Exceptional Circumstances".

**17. Definitions:**

The following definitions will apply to this policy:

Baptised and Baptised Catholic Children: Children are baptised for the purpose of this policy by either immersion in water or the pouring of water over their heads whilst the words N. (child's Christian names) I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit are

said. If this is carried out by a Catholic Minister the child is a baptised Catholic. Children can also become baptised Catholics if they have originally been baptised in another Christian denomination and they have been received into full communion with the Catholic Church. Baptisms carried out by other denominations will only be recognised if the same words are used.

Children living nearest to the school: The Governors Admissions Committee in circumstances of over-subscription will use this procedure, and when having applied all the Over-Subscription criteria and Over-Subscription - Further Criteria, the Committee still finds it impossible to establish clear differences between the candidates in over subscription criteria 10.j only the procedure to determine which child lives nearest to the school will be determined as follows:

- The distances will be measured in a direct line between the address points of the child's home and the main entrance of the school indicated on the LA's computerised system.
- In the event that the final place(s) cannot be allocated, as it is impossible to further define a difference between applications (for example, determining applications from persons of the same household such as children of multiple births or residing in the same household/building, or other applications where the distances are equal), priority will be given to those living closest to the school, measured by the shortest walking route from the front door of the home to the main entrance of the school, on the LA's Computerised system.
- If these distances are also equal, the allocation of the final place(s) will be determined by drawing lots.

Christian: Members of a Church or Community which is itself a member or associate of the World Council of Churches and the Society of Friends (Quakers), who although Christian in their beliefs, are not members of the World Council of Churches.

Clifton Diocesan Policy Statement: This is the Clifton Diocesan School's policy and is available on request from St. Joseph's School.

Code of Practice: The Admission Code of Practice 2007 is a Government Policy document and can be viewed on the DCSF website.

Drawing Lots: The Governors Admissions Committee in circumstances of over-subscription will use this procedure, and when having applied all the Over-Subscription criteria and Over-Subscription - Further Criteria, the Committee still finds it impossible to establish clear differences between the candidates in criteria 10.a-j the procedure will be:

- The names of the children concerned will be written on pieces of paper of identical size and shape, and folded so that the name is not visible unless the paper is unfolded.

- The folded papers will then be placed in a large sealed container and shaken or stirred until the Independent Observer (see below) is satisfied that the distribution of the names in the container is entirely random.
- One member of the Admissions Committee will then draw the folded papers out of the container until all the applications have been ranked, or until the ranking of children in the category is complete.
- Those whose names are recorded on the folded papers will be ranked in order of precedence in the order in which they were drawn.
- Children of multiple births will be treated as described in 'Over-Subscription - Further Criteria', and will be ranked in order of precedence by drawing lots between them as described above.

This procedure will also be used for criteria 10.k where the distances are the same.

Independent Observer: In order to ensure transparency and fairness of the 'Drawing Lots' procedure, it will be observed by an independent person who is neither a Governor, nor a member of staff, nor a parent of a current child at the school or who has applied for a place at the school.

In-Year Applications: In-year applications are those that fall outside the normal admissions round and are received on or after 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009. They will be deemed to have been received on the date the application form is returned to the school or LA.

Local Authority or LA: These abbreviations are used to describe North Somerset Council.

Looked After Children: Looked After Children are children who are in the care of local authorities, as defined by section 22 of the Children Act 1989. In relation to school admissions legislation, a 'looked after child' is only considered as such if the local authority confirms he or she to be in public care when he or she is admitted to a school.

Over Subscription: In relation to this policy, 'Over Subscription' means that the number of applications for places in any class at St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Portishead, exceeds the Admission Number of 30.

Parent(s): This includes all of those people, including carers, who have parental responsibility for a child as set out in the Children Act 1989. All references within this policy to parent(s) therefore includes carers accordingly.

Siblings: A child is a sibling when:

- they share the same biological parents, or
- they have one common biological parent, or
- they are step-brother or step-sister, or
- they are adopted or fostered into the same family

## **18. Appeals Procedure:**

Parents have the right to appeal against the refusal by the Governing Body to admit their child. Appeals will be arranged by the Diocesan Department for Schools and Colleges and conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice on School Appeals.

**19. Home to School Transport:**

North Somerset Local Authority will NOT normally provide free transport between home and school UNLESS the school attended is the nearest appropriate one as determined by the Local Authority. Also the children must qualify under current legislation, regulations, and the current policies of the Local Authority and:

- (i) the distance between home and the school is more than a distance of 2 miles for primary school aged children, measured by the shortest available walking route between the address point of the child's home indicated on the authority's computerised system and the nearest entrance to the school site

or

- (ii) the possible route(s) to the school are deemed by the Authority to be exceptionally hazardous and there is no alternative available walking route under 2 miles (as described in s(i) above)

or

- (iii) the child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs identifying the transport to be provided, having regard to their particular disabilities and normally with reference to s(i) and s(ii) above

Parents should contact the North Somerset Council Home-to-School Transport Team for the details of the transport policy.

Please note that although Saint Joseph's maybe the nearest Catholic Primary School to your home this does not make it necessarily the nearest 'appropriate' school as defined by the Local Authority. For most children the nearest primary school to their home is their nearest 'appropriate' school. If in doubt, please check with the Local Authority.

**20. Offers of Places made for the academic year 2008/09 by over subscription criteria:**

The Governors received a total of 70 applications; 43 first, 12 second and 15 third preference applications. As the Local Authority operates an equal preference system the Governors ranked all 70 applicants which fell into the categories 10.a / 10.j as listed below:

10.a: 0	10.d: 1	10.f: 4	No longer exists
10.b: 0	10.e: In Year	10.g: 5	10.i: 27

		only		+ 7 (see below)
10.c:	22	No longer exists	10.h: 0	10.j: 4

7 Children were originally ranked under criteria which no longer exist. For 6 of these the criterion was Children with one Catholic Parent, who lived in the Parish of Saint Joseph's Portishead, for the other the criterion was baptised children of other Christian denominations who live within the boundaries of the Parish of St. Joseph's Portishead.

30 applicants were offered a place.

## APPENDIX 1

### **Additional Information common to all North Somerset Voluntary Aided Schools** **Except paragraphs 9b and p**

- a) All applications for places at North Somerset schools must be made on the North Somerset common application form (or the required information may be provided in a letter). Parents/carers will be able to apply on paper or electronically and will be able to apply online up to the closing time and date only.
- b) To be considered under some of the individual religious criterions additional information is required. Where this is the case, parents/carers are required to provide such additional information, for example a copy of a baptismal certificate and/or a letter from their priest/minister/religious leader in paper or electronic format, by the closing time and date of 4.30pm on Friday 24 October 2008 for it to be considered in the first round of allocations. These items should be sent or delivered to the school office at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Bristol Road, Portishead, Bristol, BS20 6QB **irrespective** of the application method used (i.e. paper documents or on line). The Governors reserve the right to clarify qualifying evidence in support of the application. If the documents are sent or delivered in error to the Local Authority's School Admissions Team they will be considered in the first round of allocations provided they are on time. The LA's School Admissions Team will forward the additional information it receives to the school.
- c) Applications for first entry to Reception Year during the 2009-10 school year must be made to North Somerset Council, School Admissions Team, Town Hall, Weston super Mare BS23 1UJ by 4.30pm on Friday 24 October 2008 to be considered in the first round of allocations. Applications should normally be made and signed by the child's parent/carer unless the LA considers there is an acceptable reason for someone else to be applying.
- d) Applications from parents/carers who live outside the UK but will be moving to an independently confirmed North Somerset address before Term 1 2009 begins, will be considered from their UK address, assuming all residency conditions are satisfied. If the residency conditions are not satisfied, the application will be considered from the overseas address.

For the first round of school place allocations, on-time applications will otherwise be considered based on the child's and/or applicant's situation that exists as at the closing time and date. Applications,

changes in preferences, changes in family circumstances and changes of address received after the closing time and date will not be considered in the first round of allocations unless the LA considers there is an extenuating reason for allowing them to be treated as if the latest information had been received by the closing time and date. This will only apply to late applications or changes received before the allocation of places are determined.

Parents must inform North Somerset Local Authority if they change address.

Examples of extenuating circumstances include the following:

- (i) The child is from a family of a Crown Servant or of UK Service Personnel and the MOD, FCO or GCHQ have provided a letter declaring a return date and residency area.
- (ii) There has been a change in the family's circumstances and the reasons are accepted by the North Somerset Application Panel as being extenuating. For example, a parent bereavement that would affect the child's ability to attend a previously applied for school.
- (iii) If there has been any delay in the LA receiving the completed application form due to an administrative error by Children and Young People's Services Directorate staff, which has been accepted by the LA.

All other late applications will not be considered in the first round of allocations but will be considered for their preferred school(s), in accordance with relevant over-subscription criteria, in the next round of allocations if places are available. If a place is not available at the preferred school(s) the LA will offer an alternative school to North Somerset residents. On-time applicants refused a place at their preferred school(s) but still seeking a place at them, will also be considered for any such vacancies.

- e) Applications received after 31 August 2009 will be administered in accordance with North Somerset Council's In-Year admissions policies for procedure and timescales, and in accordance with the schools over-subscription criteria.

Applications considered to be complex may be considered in accordance with the LA In Year Fair Access Protocol.

- f) Places are not reserved for those who, for whatever reason, apply late.
- g) Home address – for school admission purposes the LA on behalf of the governing body will normally consider the child's home address to be the place where the child permanently and ordinarily resides for the

majority of the time. This would normally be the same address as the person who has parental responsibility for the child as their main carer. It will not include the address of a child that is different from his/her parents/carers where the move to this address is expressly linked to obtaining a school place. Where parents/carers do not live together and the child spends equal amounts of time with both parents, the LA on behalf of the governing body will consider the home of the parent/carer who receives Child Benefit to be the child's home. The LA on behalf of the governing body may undertake rigorous residency checks and reserves the right to request independent confirmation of the child's place of residence. Parents/carers may be asked to supply such documentation to support their application as deemed appropriate by the LA, for example a Child Benefit Book may be required. If the Child Benefit is shared between parents, the address to be used will be determined by drawing lots.

- h) Where the child temporarily resides away from his/her parents/carers in a different LA area, the 'home' LA will continue to be the LA where the child would usually reside with his/her parents/carers. Whilst the place of residence of the child would normally be his/her physical place of residence as at the closing time and date for applications, it should be noted that in certain circumstances and acting in the interests of the child the LA will reserve the right to exercise discretion. When an alternative place of residence may need to be considered the LA may refer such cases to the North Somerset Admissions Panel. For example where a child is temporarily living away from his/her parents home and the new temporary place of residence is the home where the child is likely to be living at whilst attending school.
- i) The LA on behalf of the governing body will undertake checks to ensure that an applicant is living at a property. A sample of applicants will be asked to provide documentation to prove that they reside at their home address, for example a copy of a recent gas or electricity bill. Applicants will be required to obtain this documentation and reply within a deadline set by the LA to any request for further information. If this documentation is not provided, the application may be withdrawn and a place allocated at the nearest school to the home address with a place available.
- j) For those moving house they will be considered from their proposed address in the first round of allocations if they are able to confirm independently by the closing time and date, that they will be moving to an address before the start of the school year. Examples of independent confirmation are a solicitor's letter confirming the exchanges of contracts with a completion date, or a tenancy agreement signed by both parties. Applicants may also be required to provide proof that they have left the previous property, for example by supplying a final account utility bill. Proof of residency received after the closing time and date will be taken into account in any subsequent rounds of school place allocations.

Parents must inform the LA if they change address.

- k) Applications must be made by the person who has parental responsibility as the main carer as defined in the Children Act 1989. Parents will be asked to confirm that they are the main carers of the child on their application form. Where parents/carers share parental responsibility for a child and two applications are received for the one child from his/her parents who reside at different addresses, the LA on behalf of the governing body will ask the parents to determine which application it should consider and which application should be withdrawn. This is because the LA will offer only one school place to a child at any one time. If parents cannot agree, they should resolve the issue through the court system. However, in the absence of any Court Order the application received from the parent who receives Child Benefit for the child will be the only one considered. Where proof of Child Benefit is not available, the decision as to who should apply will be determined by drawing lots.

Applications for all school places must be made and signed by a person with parental responsibility, preferably with whom the child lives. If this is not possible, the person completing the form should send an accompanying letter explaining the reasons why this requirement cannot be met. Any evidence to support the case should accompany the letter. The reasons will be considered by the Authority and if deemed acceptable, the application will be processed accordingly. If not deemed acceptable, the application will be returned for the signature of the person with parental responsibility for the child.

- l) The LA on behalf of the governing body will withdraw an offer for any school in limited circumstances. An example may be where it can be shown that the offer was obtained on the basis of a fraudulent or an intentionally misleading application such as a false claim to residence at a particular address, which effectively denied a place to a child with a stronger claim. Where before offers are made, an application is deemed to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading the application will be considered on the basis of the correct information.

A place offered in error by the local authority rather than the admission authority may be withdrawn.

Where parents/carers do not respond to an offer of a place within 21 days, the offer may be withdrawn and the place offered to another applicant.

- m) Children in North Somerset are admitted into primary education in the academic year in which the child reaches the age of 5. Requests for admission earlier than this will normally be refused, except where there are most exceptional circumstances. Examples of this are where the

child's emotional, social and educational development would be seriously impaired or it is known that following admission, the child's educational progress would be interrupted because of a scheduled admission to hospital for major surgery. Clear written evidence of the most exceptional circumstances is required as support of the request for early admission.

- n) All preferences (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>) will be considered equally regardless of rank. The governing body of the school, not the Local Authority will decide the allocation ranking of applications.
- o) Looked After Children. A 'looked after child' is a child who is looked after by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989(b) at the time an application for school is made, and who the local authority has confirmed will still be looked after at the time when he/she is admitted to the school
- p) For the first round of allocations, a sibling must be attending the school at the time of admission and the closing date.  
A child is a sibling when:
  - they share the same biological parents, or
  - they have one common biological parent, or
  - they are step-brother or step-sister, or
  - they are adopted or fostered into the same family
- q) Unless otherwise stated, all distances are measured in a direct line between the address points of the child's home and the main entrance to the school, indicated in the Authority's computerised system(s). Where an applicant lives in a flat or multi-home building the address point of the building will be used if it is not possible to determine the address point of the applicant's flat/home.
- r) Applications for children arriving outside of the normal admissions round for intake including children of UK Service Personnel and other Crown Servants, will be considered by the North Somerset Applications Panel to determine if they should be deemed to be an on-time application. This only applies to applications received before the first round of allocations has been determined.
- s) At the time of writing North Somerset Authority will normally provide free transport between home and school if the school attended is the nearest appropriate one, as determined by the authority and:
  - (i) the distance between home and that school is more than a distance of 2 miles for primary school aged children, measured by the shortest available walking route between the address point of the child's home indicated on the authority's computerised system and the nearest entrance to the school siteor

(ii) the possible route(s) to the school are deemed by the Authority to be exceptionally hazardous and there is no alternative available walking route under 2 miles (as described in s(i) above)

or

(iii) the child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs identifying the transport to be provided, having regard to their particular disabilities and normally with reference to s(i) and s(ii) above

Parents should contact the North Somerset Council Home-to-School Transport Team for the details of the up-to-date latest transport policy before applying.

- t) Where the Admissions Authority receives an application form that has not been fully completed with all of the information necessary to enable the application to be considered, the Authority will contact the parents to request the outstanding information. For on-time applications, if the outstanding information is supplied within a date specified by the LA to the parents/carers but after the closing date, it will be accepted as an on-time application. If it is not received within the requested timescales it will not be counted as on-time unless an explanation considered to be satisfactory by the Authority, is provided.
- u) Where the parent/main carer indicates that they no longer require a school place, they will be deemed to have withdrawn their application.
- v) Parents should be aware that North Somerset Local Authority, on behalf of the Governing Body will only offer one school place at a time. If, after receiving an offer of a North Somerset school place, parents submit a change of preference, they must understand that in doing so, they are asking North Somerset Local Authority on behalf of the Governing Body to withdraw their previous application(s) for a North Somerset school(s). This will have the immediate effect of classing their previous offer as being declined and withdrawn. Their change of preference will be treated as a completely new late application.
- w) Children who reach the age of 5 during the period 1st September 2009 to 31 August 2010 can attend school in the 2009-10 school year, before their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. Where a place may be offered before a child is of compulsory school age, it is good practice for admission authorities to offer the parents the option of deferring their child's entry until later in the school year, but no later than the beginning of term after the child's fifth birthday. Requests for admission earlier than this will normally be refused, except where there are most exceptional circumstances. Examples of this are where the child's, emotional, social and educational development would be seriously impaired or it is known that following admission, the child's educational progress would

be interrupted because of a scheduled admission to hospital for major surgery. Clear written evidence of the most exceptional circumstances is required as support of the request for early admission.

Parents may wish to defer their child's entry to school until later in the school year. Depending on their child's date of birth, places, at the request of the main parent or carer, may be deferred until the start of the terms 3 and/or 5 following the child's fifth birthday, but not the start of the following academic year. No new application will be required for later term starters when the parents take up the option of deferring their child's entry until later in the school year. The school place will be held for that child and will not be available to be offered to another child.

Parents, who, because of their child's age wish to delay admission until September 2010 should be aware that school places will NOT be held until September 2010 and that the child would be considered for admission into their chronological age group. This means that children who do not start school in the school year that they become 5 will normally be placed in a Year 1 class and will miss the Reception year. Parents should be aware that a school might become full in the Reception age group with pupils whose parents apply for a place during the 2009-10 school year. There may be no places available for those who delay their child's admission until Year 1.

These parents will need to apply for a Year 1 school place for their child.

Applications will be considered from 1 July 2010.

- x) The Local Authority, on behalf of the governing body, will hold a list of those applicants still seeking a place at the school, until the last day of term 1 in 2009. All applications will be ranked in line with the school's over-subscription criteria and allocations will be made in accordance with it. Priority will not be given on the basis simply of the date an application was added to the list. Children who are the subject of a direction by a Local Authority to admit or who are allocated a school in accordance with an In-Year Fair Access Protocol for school places, will take precedence over those on the waiting list.
- y) Some parents keep in close contact with schools to ascertain when and if any vacancies arise during the school year. Such schools may make a note of the names of children whose parents wish their child to attend their school. However they will not keep waiting lists as such. From the beginning of term 2 onwards the name of a child whose parents contact the school will be kept up to the day before the start of the next term only. Parents will have to contact the school again if they still wish to be considered for a place during each subsequent term. If a vacancy arose, the school place would be allocated in accordance with the relevant criteria. Children who are the subject of a direction by a Local Authority to admit or who are allocated a school in accordance

- with an In-Year Fair Access Protocol for school places will take precedence over those on a waiting list.
- z) Any parent who has been refused a school place will be advised of the processes relating to their right of appeal. Parents will also be told who to contact to make their appeal.
  
  - zi) The Local Authority will aim to dispatch by second class post on Friday 16 January 2009, the results of those applications that were accepted as on time. Those applicants who have applied online and indicated a wish to be notified of their allocated school electronically will be informed electronically on 16 January 2009 and also by second class post. Should places become available after the first round of allocations, places will be offered by applying the school's over-subscription criteria to those applicants still seeking a place at the school and can include any new information that has been sent for consideration. North Somerset applicants refused a place will be offered an alternative school by the Local Authority.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael James". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal dotted line.

This Policy (amended in paragraph 9.e in respect of waiting lists) was approved by the Governing Body on 19 March 2009.