

The Swan School admission arrangements for 2026-2027

Introductory statement

The Swan School is a new 11-18 school that opened in September 2019 as part of the River Learning Trust. It is an inclusive comprehensive school, looking to extend, share and enrich educational capacity and excellence for children in the city of Oxford. The school opened in temporary accommodation in September 2019 and has been based in the permanent site from September 2020.

Admission number(s)

The Swan School has an admission number of 180 for entry in year 7 in 2026. It will admit 180 pupils each year from 2021 if there are sufficient applications. Where fewer applicants than the published admission number for the relevant year group are received, the Academy Trust will offer places at The Swan School to all those who have applied.

Application process

The Swan School, part of the River Learning Trust is a free school, and as such is its own admissions authority. The River Learning Trust uses the Local Authority as its agent to process applications for places for year groups 7-11.

Details on how to apply can be found via the Local Authority website:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/starting-school>

Oversubscription criteria

The school has a designated catchment area which can be found as appendix 1 to this policy and at <https://theswanschool.org.uk/for-parents/catchment-information/>

When the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care plan naming the school, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in priority order:

1. Looked after children and children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special

guardianship order¹; this includes those who appear to this Admissions Authority to have been in state care outside England (IApLAC)² and ceased to be in state care

having been adopted [see explanation below]. Evidence of the previously looked after status and/or the adoption will be requested.

2. Children who live in the school's designated catchment area and are eligible for the pupil premium, including the service premium².
3. Children who live within the catchment area of the school who have a sibling who is currently on role and will still be attending the Swan School at the time of entry
4. Other children who live within the catchment area of the school. A map of the catchment area is provided as part of this policy.
5. Children who live outside the school's designated catchment area and are eligible for the pupil premium, including the service premium. See 2. for eligibility details
6. Children who live outside the catchment area of the school who have a sibling who is currently on roll and will still be attending the Swan School at the time of entry.
7. Other children who live outside the catchment area of the school

Tie-break

If in categories 2-7 a tie break is required to determine the final child admitted, priority will be given to children who live closest to the school by "straight line distance" as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education & Families' Geographic Information System. See 'Distance Criterion' below for more details. If two children are tied for the final place and live equidistant from the school, random allocation undertaken by the local authority (Oxford County Council) will be used as a tie-break to decide who will be admitted.

Siblings

For admissions purposes, a brother or sister is defined as one of the following:

- A brother or sister (both parents the same) living at the same home address; or
- A half- brother or half-sister (one parent the same) living at the same home address; or
- A step-brother or step-sister (sharing a parent who is married or in a civil partnership) living at the same home address; or
- An adopted child who, by reason of the adoption, now shares one or more parents with a child living at the same home address.
- A foster child who, by reason of the fostering, now shares one or more parents with a child living at the same home address. Admission of children outside their normal age group

¹ A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

² The 2021 School Admissions Code regards a child as having been in state care outside 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.

Previously “Looked After” children

The School Admissions Code 2012 introduced a requirement for all admission authorities to broaden the existing priority for 'looked after' children or children in care (defined in section 22 of the [Children Act 1989](#)) to also include 'previously looked after' children. Children who were 'previously looked after' were defined for admissions purposes as those who, immediately after being in care, became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order.

A revised School Admissions Code came into force on 19 December 2014 and this states that 'previously looked after' children include those who were adopted under the [Adoption Act 1976](#) (see Section 12 - Adoption Orders) and not simply those children who were adopted under the [Adoption and Children Act 2002](#) (see Section 46 - Adoption Orders). In addition, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders. Those who previously received a residence order are now deemed to have a child arrangement order.

If applying on behalf of a “previously looked after” child the parent will need to provide the following evidence:

- an Adoption Order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002; or
- an Adoption Order under the Adoption Act 1976; or
- a Child Arrangements Order; or
- a Residence Order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989; or
- a Special Guardianship Order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian(s), under section 14A of the Children Act 1989.

Children who appear to this Admission Authority to have been in state care outside England and ceased to be in state care after being adopted (“internationally adopted previously looked after children”) (IAPLAC))

A further revised School Admissions Code was agreed in July 2021 and this came into force on 1 September 2021. The new Code further broadens the existing priority for 'looked after' children and 'previously looked after' children to include those children who appear to an Admission Authority to have been in state care outside England (in the School Admissions Code 2021 they are referred to as “internationally adopted previously looked after children” (IAPLAC), and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. The Code regards a child as having been in state care outside 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.

Responsibility for determining whether a child is eligible to be considered as an IAPLAC rests with the Admission Authority. Subject to ministerial approval, the Department for Education plans to publish non-statutory guidance on the admission of IAPLAC. This guidance will aim to assist and support admission authorities in assessing evidence provided by parents. If there is doubt about the acceptability of evidence provided by the parent advice will be sought from the Head of Oxfordshire's Virtual School. This Admissions Authority will take a pragmatic approach to the decision-making process where evidence is lacking.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted to a year group outside their normal age range, for instance where the child is gifted or talented or where a child has suffered from particular social or medical issues impacting his or her schooling. All such requests will be considered on the individual merits of each case and in the best interests of the child and either agreed or refused, on that basis. If a request is refused, the child will still be considered for admission to their normal age group.

The process for requesting such an admission is as follows: With the application, parents should request that the child is admitted to another year group (state which one), and the reasons for that request. Parents will submit any evidence in support of their case with the application, for instance from a medical practitioner, headteacher etc.

Some of the evidence a parent might submit could include:

- 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; and
- whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

The school will consider each case on its merits, taking into account the individual circumstances of the request and the child's best interests. We will also ensure the parent is aware of whether the request for admission out of age group has been agreed before final offers are made, and the reason for any refusal. Requests for admission out of the normal year group will be considered alongside other applications made at the same time. An application from a child who would 'normally' be a year 8 child for a year 7 place will be considered alongside applications for year 7.

In Year Admission

The Local Authority coordinates in-year admissions to The Swan School.

Applications can be made by following the guidance on Oxfordshire County Council's website <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/transferring-or-moving-different-school>

Waiting lists

The Swan School will operate a waiting list for each year group. Where in any year the school receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until the end of the academic year. This will be maintained by Oxfordshire County Council Local Authority Admissions Team and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on this list, following an unsuccessful application.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The list will be reordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list.

Appeals

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code.

Appellants should contact Oxfordshire County Council for information on how to appeal. Information on the timetable for the appeals process is on the website at

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals.

Should you have difficulty completing the information on their website please contact: School Appeals Team, Law and Culture, 1st Floor, County Hall, New Road, Oxford, OX1 1ND. Tel: 01865 810180 Email: schoolappeals@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Distance criterion

If in categories 2-7 above a tie-break is necessary to determine which child is admitted, the child living closest to the school by straight line distance will be given priority for admission. The River Learning Trust uses the Local Authority's measuring system, whereby the route from home to school has been measured using "straight line distance".

Information about how measurements will be made to calculate home to school distances using a straight line distance using the Council's Geographic Information System is [available online](#).

The start point of the measurement is the "seed point" of the home address. The "seed point" is provided by Ordnance Survey from information compiled from Royal Mail and/or Local Land & Property Gazetteers (LLPG). The seed point normally falls within the bounds of a property. The accuracy of seed points is to the nearest metre and uses the British (all-numeric) Coordinate System (Easting/Northing). It is not possible to verify the individual location of every seed point prior to measuring due to the number of addresses in Oxfordshire and surrounding areas.

The end point of the straight line distance is the front doors to the main Reception of the permanent site of the school.

The calculation of the distance will be made in metres using a Pythagoras calculation. This calculation will be converted into miles by dividing the distance by 1609.344 to achieve a distance in miles accurate to three decimal places.

For addresses outside the British Coordinate System an internet mapping solution will be used to determine a start point using longitude and latitude via getlatlong.net/. A straight line distance will then be calculated to the end point at the academy in statute miles using www.nhc.noaa.gov/gccalc.shtml

Random Allocation

If in categories 2-7 above a tie-break is necessary to determine which child is admitted, random allocation undertaken by the local authority will be used as a tie-break to decide who will be admitted.



Catchment Area

Site of School:



Date of the most recent Consultation	
Date the policy was determined <i>(no later than 28th February)</i>	
Name, Job Title and Signature of Responsible Officer signing on behalf of Admissions Authority (e.g. Chair of Governors)	
Date of Next Review	