



MERCHANT TAYLORS'
OXFORDSHIRE
ACADEMY TRUST



ADMISSIONS POLICY

Version 1.0

2025-2026

*Wellbeing
Committee*

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1. Admissions Policy

Wallingford School is an 11-18 mixed comprehensive school that aims to provide high quality education for students of all abilities. Our aim is to ensure that when students leave they are both 'Able and Qualified' so that they can lead a successful life.

The allocation of places for students wishing to attend Wallingford School is set out on the following pages and using the criteria identified herein.

2. Approved Admission Arrangements for Wallingford School

This document sets out the proposed admission arrangements for Wallingford School, hereinafter referred to as 'the Academy' for 2025 - 2026, based on the arrangements found in the Funding Agreement between Merchant Taylors' Oxfordshire Academy Trust (MTOAT) and the Secretary of State for Schools.

Notwithstanding these arrangements, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to admit a named student to the Academy on application from a local authority (LA). Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult with the Academy.

3. Admission Arrangements

a. Arrangements for admission to 11-16 provision

The admission arrangements for the Academy are as follows:

- i. The Academy has an agreed admission number of 243 students in Year 7. The Academy will accordingly admit at least, and no more than, 243 students in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are submitted.
- ii. The Academy may set a higher admission number as its published admission number (PAN) for any specific year. Before setting an admission number higher than its agreed admission number, the Academy will inform those set out in section 4a below. Students will not be admitted above the published admission number unless exceptional circumstances apply.
- iii. Children with a statement of special educational need or education and health care plan of equivalent status that name the Academy in part 4 of the statement will be allocated a place.

b. Process of application

- i. Applications for places at the Academy will be made in accordance with the LA's coordinated admission arrangements and will be made on the common application form (CAF) provided and administered by the LA. Information can be found at: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/online-school-applications

- ii. The Academy will use the following timetable for applications each year, which, whenever possible, will fit in with the common timetable agreed by the local authority. The Academy will also provide information for the local authority, for inclusion in the composite prospectus.
 1. By September of the preceding year the Academy will publish the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for the following September (e.g. in September for admission in the following September). This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective students and their parents to visit the school.
 2. Early October: The Academy will provide opportunities for parents to visit the Academy (open evening).
 3. October: Common application form (CAF) to be completed and returned to the LA to administer.
 4. The LA will then send a list of applications to the Academy.
 5. January: The Academy sends a list of students to be offered a place to the LA.
 6. February: LA applies agreed scheme for its own schools, informing other LAs of offers to be made to students for whom they are responsible.
 7. 1st March: Offers made to parents.
 8. 30th March: Deadline for parents to accept or refuse the offer of a place.

NB: For the academic year this policy relates to, applications will be processed by Oxfordshire County Council (including in-year applications).

c. Consideration of applications

- i. In the Academic year this policy relates to (2025 – 2026), the Academy will consider all applications for places. If in any year there are fewer than 243 applications received, the Academy will offer places to all those who have applied.
- ii. There may be applications for students who have been excluded from two or more other schools. The ability to refuse admissions runs for a period of two years since the last exclusion. This applies to admissions at all age levels.

d. What happens when the Academy is oversubscribed?

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number for any relevant age group, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below. These will be applied in the following order of priority:

- i. Children who are looked after by a local authority within the meaning of section 22 of the Children's Act 1989 at the time of their application, and previously looked after children; this includes children who are looked after

from outside the UK. The term 'previously looked after' refers only to children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).

- ii. Children with a disability who need to be admitted to the Academy on the grounds of physical accessibility, where this is supported by professional evidence being submitted at the time of application. The definition of disability is that contained within the Disability Discrimination Act as amended.
- iii. Children of a member of MTOAT staff where: the member of staff has been employed by MTOAT for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the Academy is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
- iv. Children living in the Academy's designated area (as defined by the admissions guidance booklet issued by the LA). If there are more applicants than places in this category, priority will be given in the following descending order:
 1. First priority will go to those children who have siblings who already attend and who will still be on roll at the time of admission, other than students who at the time are in the sixth form but were not previously in lower years. The term sibling means a full, step, half, adopted or fostered brother or sister but not cousins who live at the same permanent address. However, if there are more applicants than places, priority will be given to those children whose permanent address is closest to the Academy using the nearest designated public route as defined on the LA's Directorate for Children, Young People and Families' geographic information system. A child's permanent address is where he or she normally lives and sleeps and goes to school from. Proof of residence may be requested at any time throughout the admissions process.
 2. Second priority will go to those children whose permanent address is closest to the Academy by the nearest designated public route as defined on the LA's Directorate for Children, Young People and Families' geographic information system.
- v. Children living outside the designated area who have siblings who already attend and who will still be on roll at the time of admission. If there are more applicants than places, priority will be given to those children who live closest to the Academy by the nearest designated public route as defined on the LA's geographic information system.

- vi. Children who attend a partner primary school and live outside the designated area, as listed in Oxfordshire's composite prospectus.
- vii. Those children who live closest to the Academy by the nearest designated public route as defined on the Directorate for Children, Education and Families' geographic information system.

NB: If false or misleading information is used to gain entry to the Academy, the offer of a place may be withdrawn and the application cancelled.

e. Arrangements for admissions to post-16 provision

The Academy will publish specific criteria in relation to minimum entrance requirements for the range of courses available based upon GCSE grades or other measures of prior attainment. The detailed information will be contained in the sixth form options booklet, published annually.

- i. Children already on roll are entitled to transfer to the sixth form if they meet the published standards for entry.
- ii. The admission number for the sixth form (Year 12 and Year 13) will total 285 students. The Academy will accept external students up to that figure less the number of the Academy's own students who are accepted into the sixth form. The number of external places will vary each year. If the sixth form is oversubscribed, the same criteria as in the rest of the school will be applied to determine which external students to admit.

f. Operation of continued-interest list (waiting list)

- i. Where, in any year group, the Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a continued-interest list will operate throughout the year. This list will remain for one academic year. This will be maintained by Oxfordshire County Council on behalf of the Academy and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the list, following an unsuccessful application.
- ii. Children's position on the continued-interest list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out in this document. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

g. Random allocation (*TIE BREAK*)

If the distance 'tie break' produces an identical result for two or more applicants, the Academy will use random allocation to determine who will be offered the place.

h. Twins and children from multiple births

Where the parent has made the same preference for the Academy and through the normal operation of the admission arrangements the last available place has been allocated to one twin, or child from a multiple birth, the other twin, or child from a multiple birth, will be offered a place at the Academy, even though this will mean that the published admission number would be exceeded.

i. Arrangements for appeals

Parents will have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of the Academy. The appeal panel will be independent of the Academy. The arrangements for appeals will be in line with the Code of Practice on School Admission Appeals, published by the Department for Education.

NB: Currently this process is operated on our behalf by Oxfordshire County Council.

j. In-year admissions

This includes admitting students to other years during the school year, including replacing students who have left the Academy. Subject to any provisions in the LA's coordinated admission arrangements, the Academy will consider all such applications and, if the year group number is below the PAN, the Academy shall admit the student at the earliest convenience. Where any new student has a current 'statement of educational needs' or education and health care plan of equivalent status, the Academy will require time to put support in place before the student commences at the Academy. If more applications are received than places are available, the oversubscription criteria in section d will apply. Parents / carers whose application is unsuccessful will be entitled to appeal. The school will publish a link to the LA's in-year admissions arrangements on the school website by 31 October each year.

k. Fair access protocol (IYFAP)

The Academy will participate in Oxfordshire's 'In-Year Fair Access Panel' (IYFAP) arrangements.

4. Annual Procedures for Determining Admission Arrangements

a. Consultation

The Academy will consult by 1st March each year, when appropriate, on its proposed admission arrangements, with:

- i. Oxfordshire Local Authority.
- ii. The Admission Forum in Oxfordshire.
- iii. Any other admission authorities for primary and secondary schools located within the relevant area for consultation set by Oxfordshire Local Authority.
- iv. Affected admission authorities in neighbouring local authorities.

b. Publication of admission arrangements

The Academy will determine its admission arrangements each year by 15th April and will publish these once they have been determined. Copies will be sent to:

- ii. All primary schools and secondary schools in Oxfordshire LA.
- iii. The offices of Oxfordshire LA.
- iv. Copies to be made available (free of charge) on request from the Academy.

The published arrangements will include:

- i. The name and address of the Academy and contact details.
- ii. A summary of the admissions policy, including oversubscribed criteria.
- iii. Information on the number of places available and the number of applications received in the previous year.
- iv. Arrangements for the hearing of appeals.

5. Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

The governing body will review this policy every year and assess its effectiveness and any relevant implications. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academy.