Robert Blake Science College
“Learning for tomorrow’s world”

School Admissions Policy 2017/18

Robert Blake Science College is a Foundation School and as such the governing body is the admissions authority for the school.

Applications for Year 7 in September 2017
All applications for admission, must be submitted to your home Local Authority by the closing date of 31st October 2016, and will be considered under the Equal Preference with Ranking system of allocation. The LA will forward all applications to the school and the governing body will rank them against the oversubscription criteria set out below. This list will then be returned to the LA under the co-ordinated admissions scheme and they will make a single offer of a place on 1st March 2017 or next working day if this falls on a weekend.

In-year Admissions
Applications for a place during the academic year must be made directly to the school office, by completing the Governors in-year application form. A copy can be downloaded from the school website or collected/sent from the school office, or from the Local Authority. Applications will not be processed more than six weeks or half a term in advance of the place being required. The Governors’ Admissions Committee will consider applications on a weekly basis with a 4pm deadline every Friday and applicants will receive a written response within 10 school days following receipt of the application. Where a school place is offered it will be held open for 14 school days and applicants will need to confirm acceptance within this time.

Over-subscription criteria
In the event of over-subscription, applications will be ranked against the following over-subscription criteria set for the school.

The Admission Number for Year 7 point of entry will be 166 pupils.

The school will be required to admit a child with a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) if the school is named before the following criteria are applied:

1. Children in the care of a Local Authority or have previously been and are now formally adopted or subject to a residence/child arrangements or special guardianship order. (See Important Note 1)

2. Children without a statement of Special Educational Needs, identified with a sensory, physical or medical disability (High Needs Pupils), where a multi-agency professional team has identified the schools as the nearest accessible school (See Important Note 2)

3. Children living in the catchment area with an older sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

4. Children living in the catchment area.

5. Children living outside the catchment area, with an older sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who live at the same address.

6. Children outside the catchment area, but nearest the school.
Important Notes:

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). Adoption is defined under the terms of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

2. This criterion enables schools to plan with SEN Officers for the school entry of children with physical, medical or sensory impairments. This includes children that are in receipt of Early Years School Action Plus funding at level 3 and/or where significant capital works (e.g., accessible toilets, changing space, access to classrooms) are required. And/or children that are identified as requiring a place at a Resource Base attached to a mainstream school. The lead time on these projects means that school place outcome dates are too late for work to be completed in time for school entry in September. However, with the support of this criterion plans can be actioned with certainty early in the year.

3. If there are not enough places to satisfy all the applications under any one criterion, the following will apply:

   Preference will be given to applicants who live closest to the school, as measured in a straight line by a Geographical Information System (GIS) method from the address point of the school site to the address point for the pupil's home. Where two distances are equal and it is therefore not possible to differentiate between them, priority will be determined by independent drawing of lots.

4. A copy of the schools catchment map is available to view at the school and can also be viewed on the Local Authority website [www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions).

**Siblings**

For the purposes of Admissions, a sibling is defined as a child living at the same address as a half or full brother or sister, an adoptive brother or sister or children of the same household.

**Multiple birth applications (for example twins)**

Where the last place within the Published Admission Number is allocated to a multiple birth application, a place(s) will be allocated to any siblings above the Published Admission Number at the point of allocation. This will ensure that multiple birth siblings can be allocated places at the same school (sibling definition still applies).

This includes situations whereby admitting a multiple birth sibling would breach the Infant class size legislation of a statutory limit of 30 infants (key stage 1 children) per qualified teacher.

**Parent or parent/carer**

Natural parents, whether they are married or not, any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person. Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child is considered to be a parent in education law).

**Home Address**

The home address is important as school places are allocated on the basis of the home address of each child. A child’s home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with the person(s) who have care of the child.
Documentary evidence of ownership or suitable rental agreement may be required, together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property concerned. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of intended future changes of address unless house moves have been confirmed through the exchange of contracts or the signing of a minimum six month formal lease agreement from a letting agency. Please note private letting agreements may not be accepted as proof of residence. An address change due to a move to live with family or friends will not be considered until the move has taken place and suitable proof of residency has been obtained. Proof that a move from the previous address has taken place may also be required eg proof of exchange of contracts, a tenancy agreement showing the end date of the tenancy or a notice to quit from the landlord or repossession notice. The Admissions Authority reserves the right to seek further documentary evidence to support your claim to residence.

Please note that the Admissions Authority is unable to allocate a place to anyone moving into the country from abroad prior to their arrival in the county. We would then require proof of residency as stated above. The only exceptions are children of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants (including Diplomats).

It should also be noted that an address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. A fraudulent claim to an address may lead to the withdrawal of the offer of a place.

You must notify The Admissions & Entitlements Team, County Hall, Taunton of any change of address during the admissions procedure.

**Issues relating to shared residency arrangements**
Where shared residence arrangements are in place and parents/carers of the child submit two separate applications for different schools, the LA requires parents to resolve matters between themselves, taking legal advice if necessary, and inform the LA which application should be processed. The LA will not become involved in private disputes. If more than one offer of a school place is made, the LA would expect one of the places to be withdrawn by the parent. If this is not the case, when the child starts school, the alternative school place will be withdrawn by the LA.

**Distance Measurements**
For the purpose of measuring home to school distance, all calculations will be measured using a straight-line measurement from the address point of the home to the address point of the school using the LA’s GIS mapping system. (Address Point is a dataset that uniquely defines and locates residential, business and public postal addresses in Great Britain. It is created by matching information from Ordnance Survey digital map databases with more than 27 million addresses recorded in the Royal Mail).

**Equal Preference with Ranking allocation method**
This approach requires the Local Authority to rank all applications against the published over-subscription criteria for the school concerned and where schools are over subscribed, places will be allocated up to the published admission number in strict priority order. Where more than one school can be offered, the highest ranked preference will be allocated.

**Waiting list**
Where an application has been refused, the child will be placed on a waiting list. This will be kept on order of over-subscription criteria by the Governing Body, and will be maintained until the end of the academic year to which the application applies. Waiting lists will be re-ordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever a child joins or leaves the waiting list. Where places become available within the Admission Number they will be allocated to the highest ranked eligible child on the maintained list.

Children who are the subject of a direction by a Local Authority to admit or who are allocated to the school in accordance with the In-Year Fair Access Protocols, will take precedence over those children on a waiting list.
Appeals
Applicants whose school place application is turned down have the legal right of appeal to an independent appeal panel against the decision to refuse admission. Details concerning how to appeal are explained in the decision letters sent out when a place is refused. Information on the timetable for the appeals process is available on the school website by 28 February each year.

Children from Outside the UK

The Governing Body will consider applications for children who are citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA) if proof of the Somerset address and the expected date of arrival in the UK are provided by 15 January for primary phase applications and 31 October for secondary phase applications. The application can then be considered on this address. If proof of the Somerset address is not available by the dates above the application will be considered on the current address. Please click on this link for a list of the countries in the EEA.

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/international/social-security-agreements/list-of-countries/

The Governing Body will also process applications for UK citizens living in any other country if proof of the Somerset address and the expected date of arrival back in the UK are provided by 15 January for primary phase applications and 31 October for secondary phase applications. The application can then be considered on this address. If proof of the Somerset address is not available by the dates above the application will be considered on the current address. The only exceptions are children of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants (including Diplomats) returning to the area.

The Governing Body will not allocate a place to any non EEA citizen moving into Somerset from outside the UK prior to their arrival in the country. The Governing Body will require copies of the passports, appropriately endorsed visas and proof of residency – see home address definition.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group. When such a request is made, the academy trust will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the views of the headteacher and any supporting evidence provided by the parent.

The process for requesting such an admission is as follows;

- The parent/carer is required to make an application for their child's normal age group but can submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time.
- The parent/carer is required to submit a request for admission out of the normal age group and attach supporting evidence as necessary. The Governing Body have the right to request further evidence that may be required.
- The Governing Body will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.
- The Governing Body will write to the parent with the outcome and set out clearly the reasons for their decision.
- One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference schools.

Withdrawal of places

The Governing Body will consider withdrawing the offer of a place if;

- The place has been offered on the basis of an application which is subsequently found to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading.
- The parent/carer has not responded to the offer within a reasonable period of time and a further opportunity has been given for the parent to respond within 10 days having explained that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not.
Children of UK Service Personnel
The Admissions Authority endeavour to ensure that their admission arrangements support the Government’s commitment to removing disadvantage for service children. In year applications are usually considered for admission up to a maximum of half a term in advance of the place being taken up. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and other Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area where a place can be made available up to a year in advance of being required providing the appropriate documentation is provided as proof of posting (an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting.)

Usually, an in year place may be allocated prior to actual residency, only on receipt of exchange of contracts or a formal signed rental agreement. An exception is made for children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area and other Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area. This means that, providing the application is accompanied by an official government letter (e.g. MOD, FCO or GCHQ) declaring a relocation date and intended posting, the admissions authority will process the application. If a home address is not available at this stage the admissions authority will accept a unit postal address or quartering area address.

If the parent/carer is moving to the area as a result of leaving the armed forces then no special consideration will be given to the application under the grounds of the application being made by a service family.

For further information please refer to the DfE explanatory note on Admission of Children of Crown Servants;