Part 1 - General information

1.1 About our School

Set in a rural location, our school benefits from a wonderful range of facilities, including our own outdoor swimming pool, Forest School and wildlife area. In 2007, we were awarded 'Outstanding' and given Grade 1 in all areas by Ofsted who commented, "children at this school not only do outstandingly well at their work, but also develop their personal and social self-confidence, often quite dramatically." On 1st April 2011, the school's excellence was recognized by the coalition government and we became the first ‘First’ school, in the country, to be awarded academy status.

As a first school we accept pupils between the ages of four and nine, into five separate classes: Reception to Year Four. As a rule, our pupil number per class is up to and around 30 and this is reflected in our PAN (‘Pupils Admission Number’ for entry into Reception class) for 2015/16, which is set at 30. Pupils who attend Weare Academy typically transfer to Hugh Sexey Middle School, Blackford at the end of year four, and then to Kings of Wessex Upper School, Cheddar, at the end of year eight.

Weare Academy First School is a Church of England School with a Christian ethos and strong links to Crook Peak Parish. Our Senior Management Team and governors have set a clear Christian direction for the school. We have a welcoming, inclusive ethos and are committed to encouraging a lifelong love of learning, care and respect of all.

The inclusive nature of our school is demonstrated by our commitment to providing high quality teaching and support for all our pupils, with a view to ensuring each child reaches their full potential. We have a Hearing Resource base on site, which provides experienced, specialist support for some of our pupils. We provide enrichment activities across the curriculum and are committed to making provision for our gifted and talented children. Our aim is encapsulated in our school motto ‘All can achieve’.

1.2 Contact details

Weare Academy First School
Nottinghill Way
Weare
Somerset
BS26 2JS
Telephone: 01934 732270
Fax: 01934 732560
1.3 The Published Admission Number (PAN)

A statutory PAN applies for the year of entry (Reception) and this indicates the number of places available in this year group. However, in accordance with the School Admissions Code, the governors may increase the PAN from time to time. Any change will be clearly notified on the school website and appended to these admission arrangements.

The PAN set for the 2017/18 academic year is **30 and this is also the number of places available in other year groups**. The governors’ Admissions Committee will consider all applications received for Reception in accordance with these admission arrangements and places will be offered until the PAN is reached, at which point the governors will consider refusing all other applications.

A similar admission limit applies for all year groups other than the year of entry. This may vary sometimes according to the resource available and the need to ensure the efficient delivery of education

1.4 Relevant Documents: Please read this information before applying for a school place

Important documents published by every Local Authority are relevant to some areas of school admissions procedure. Applicants are strongly advised to contact their ‘home’ Local Authority (the Local Authority area in which your child lives) or access the Local Authority website and ensure that they read and understand this information before proceeding with an application for a school place. Related documents of particular importance are:

- The Local Authority Coordinated Admissions Scheme (this applies to starting and transferring school for the first time)
- The Composite Prospectus ‘Primary Guide for Parents’
- The Local Authority Fair Access Protocol
- The Local Authority School Transport policy
- Free School Meal Entitlement
Part 2 - Over Subscription Criteria

2.1 The Special Educational Needs Code requires the governors to admit any children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs/Education, Health and Care plan naming Weare Academy First School, before the consideration of any further applications. Following the admission of any child with a Statement/plan naming this school, the governors will consider all other applications received by the relevant closing date.

2.2 Where there are more applications than there are places available within the required year group, the governors will consider all applications received on time against the following oversubscription criteria. This will enable the governors to rank children according to priority and identify those children who should be allocated a place within the PAN or admission limit (see section 1.3) and those who should be refused. Places will be allocated strictly in accordance with the Equal Preference with Ranking allocation method.

2.3 Over Subscription Criteria

1. Looked After Children – Children who are in the care of a Local Authority or have been previously and are now formally adopted or subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order (see important note)

2. Children living in the school catchment area, with an older sibling attending Weare Academy First School at the application closing date and who will still be on roll at the time of admission. (see sections 6.5 Sibling and 6.11 Catchment map)

3. Children living in the school catchment area (see section 6.11 Catchment map)

4. Children living outside the school catchment area, with an older sibling attending Weare Academy First School at the application closing date, who will still be on roll at the time of admission (see sections 6.5 Sibling and 6.11 Catchment map)

5. Children of staff who have been employed by the school for more than two years at the application closing date.

6. Children assessed as eligible for pupil premium funding at the time of application

7. Children not satisfying a higher criterion.
Important Note

This means a ‘looked after’ child or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. 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.

2.4 Tie Breaker:

Where the PAN (see section 1.3) is reached part way through any criterion, places will be allocated in priority order up to the PAN to those children living nearest to the school by straight line measurement using 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 or more children are assessed as exactly equal and it cannot otherwise be determined which child has the higher priority for a school place or a position on a waiting list, the order of priority will be determined by the drawing of lots for these children supervised by someone independent of the Admission Authority and the school.

Part 3 – Starting School in the Reception Year Group for the first time

3.1 The following information should be read in conjunction with the 2017 Coordinated Admissions Scheme published by the Local Authority in which area the child subject to the application lives (the home Local Authority). Additionally, applicants should read the information contained in the Local Authority’s admissions guide for parents, which will explain the admission application process in detail. These documents should be available on the home Local Authority’s website or upon request to that Local Authority.

3.2 Application forms to start at the school for the first time in the Reception year group in September 2017 must be submitted directly to the home Local Authority, to arrive no later than 23:59 hours on 15th January 2017. Applications may be made electronically ‘on line’ or by completing a paper application form available from the home Local Authority.

3.3 The home Local Authority will forward applications directly to the Local Authority in which area the preferred school is located. Where this is Weare Academy First School, the school office will be notified of all applications received and the governors Admissions Committee will meet and rank every
application received **on time** according to these published admission arrangements

3.4 The governors allocation decisions will be notified to Somerset Local Authority in accordance with this authority’s Coordinated Admissions Scheme timetable and the **home Local Authority** will then inform parents of individual decisions on **17th April 2017** by email or second class post.

**Part 4 - Admission to any year group during the 2017/18 academic year (in-year admission)**

Applications can be submitted at any time during the academic year, by completing the governors’ in-year application form and returning this directly to the school office. The governors will not consider any applications received during school holiday periods until school resumes. Applications will not be processed more than six weeks or half a term in advance of being required. The application form is available to download from the school website, or a copy can be provided upon request to the school office.

4.1 The Governors’ Admissions Committee will consider in-year applications in the order they arrive at the school. The governors’ Admissions Committee will take admission decisions within five **school** days of receipt of the completed application form. Where the request is for the child’s chronological age year group and there is a place available, the decision will normally be to admit the child concerned and applicants will be notified of this in writing.

4.2 Where the governors have more than one application to consider at any one time for the same year group, they may need to apply the published oversubscription criteria in order to determine a priority for admission where insufficient places exist (see Part 2 – Oversubscription Criteria)

4.3 Where the requested chronological age year group is oversubscribed, the governors will carefully consider whether an additional child might still be admitted to the school without impacting on the available resources or affecting the delivery of education. Normally the decision will be to refuse admission if the year group is full and, where this is the case, parents will be notified in writing of the reasons for refusal and about how to appeal against the governors’ decision (see Part 5 of these arrangements).

4.4 In-year decision letters will be sent out from the School Office within 5 **school** days of the Admission Committee decision being taken. Applicants will be expected to confirm their acceptance of any place offered within 21 school days (see 6.10 Withdrawing an allocated place)
4.5 The governors Admissions Committee may refer some in-year admission applications in accordance with the Somerset Local Authority ‘Fair Access Protocol’, where the information provided by an applicant on the school place application form indicates that the child concerned may require additional support or an alternative school provision. Applicants are advised to read the Local Authority ‘Fair Access Protocol’ document before completing an in-year application form. This document can be downloaded and/or read on the Somerset County Council website.

**Part 5 - Appeals Procedure**

5.1 Parents have the legal right to appeal to an independent appeal panel against the governors’ decision to refuse a place at Weare Academy First School for a child in their care, providing a formal application for a school place has been submitted and a decision letter sent out on behalf of the Governing Body explaining the reasons for refusal. Full details explaining the appeal application process will be enclosed with this decision letter.

5.2 An appeal timetable will be published on the school website by 28th February every year. This sets out the timeframe for the various stages in the appeal process and includes statutory dates by which appeals must be heard. The governors do not organise appeal hearings during school holiday periods and any appeal applications received when the school is closed will not be administered until school resumes.

5.3 The appeal application form must always be completed and submitted to the School Office within 21 school days of the date on the decision refusal letter. An appeal application form will be enclosed with the refusal letter or a copy can be downloaded from the school website or obtained from the School Office.

**Part 6 – Important Information**

6.1 **Waiting Lists**
The governors operate waiting lists for every year group. Where a child is formally refused admission to any year group, parents may request that his/her child’s name is placed on the appropriate waiting list. This is held in ranked order according to the oversubscription criteria. The waiting lists will be re-ordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever a child joins or leaves the waiting list. Waiting lists will be maintained until the end of the academic year. If a place becomes available within the Published Admission Number or other admission limit, this will be offered to the highest ranked child at that time.

6.2 **Admission of children below compulsory school age**
Where offered a place, parents are entitled to a part-time or full-time place at school for their child in the September following their fourth birthday. Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. A child becomes of compulsory school age when they reach the age of five and, where a parent has elected to register their child at school, they must start school on a full-time basis in the term following their fifth birthday.

6.3 Deferred Entry
Parents offered a place for their child have a right to defer entry, or to take a place up part-time, until the start of the term beginning immediately after their child has reached compulsory school age. However, places cannot be deferred until the next academic year.

6.4 Summer Born Children
Parents of summer born children may request that they are admitted into reception rather than year one when they become of compulsory school age. Applications will be considered as set out below ((see admission of children outside their normal age group)

6.5 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 attaching 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.
- In the case of applications for summer born children to be admitted out of their normal age group the parent will receive the outcome before the primary national offer day.
- If their request is agreed, their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If their request is refused, the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to
refuse it and make an in year application for admission to year one for the September following the child’s fifth birthday.

• Where a parent’s request is agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year.
• 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.

6.6 **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 siblings would breach the Infant class size legislation of a statutory limit of 30 infants (key stage 1 children) per qualified teacher.

6.7 **Children from Overseas**
The governors’ Admissions Committee will consider applications submitted on behalf of children from overseas in accordance with European Union Law, or Home Office rules for non-European Economic Area nationals. However, governors will not allocate a place to anyone moving into the country from abroad prior to their arrival in the county. Proof of actual residency will be required (see section 6.10 Home address). The only exceptions are children of UK Service personnel and other Crown servants (including Diplomats) returning to the local area. In these circumstances, an official letter declaring a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address will be acceptable.

6.8 **Siblings**
For the purpose of school admission, the governors’ definition of a sibling is ‘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 at the time of application and remaining so at the time of admission’.

6.9 **Parent**
A ‘parent’ in education law includes natural parents, whether they are married or not and a person other than the natural parent(s) who has parental responsibility or care of a child or young person. Having ‘care’ of a child or young person means that person who looks after the child and with whom the child lives, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.
6.10 **Home Address**
For the purposes of school admission, the governors’ definition of a child’s home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with the person(s) who legally have care of the child. Documentary evidence of house ownership or a minimum six-month rental agreement may be required, together with proof of the child’s residence at the property concerned. Places will not be allocated on the basis of a future house move unless this can be confirmed through the exchange of contract or a minimum six month signed formal lease agreement from a letting agency in place at the time of application. 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 Governing Body reserve the right to seek further documentary evidence to support any claim of residence which could include contacting the estate agent, solicitor landlord or relevant professional. An address used for childcare arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. The governors may withdraw the offer of a school place if the child’s home address is subsequently found to be fraudulent.

6.11 **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 school to the address point of the child’s home address (as defined in 6.10) using a Geographical Information System (GIS) method.

6.12 **Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs/ Education, Health and Care plan**
Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs/Education, Health and Care plan are admitted to school in accordance with a separate process administered by the Local Authority (LA) in whose area the child lives. The governors must always admit a child whose Statement/plan names Weare Academy First School.

6.13 **Withdrawing an allocated place**
The governors will expect parents to confirm by post or email within 21 school days, their acceptance of any in year place offered at the school. The child must then be attending school within six weeks or half a term of the date of the original offer letter. The governors reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a place if these conditions are not met and to reallocate the place to the highest ranked child on a waiting list, or to a new applicant where no waiting list exists. The governors may also withdraw the offer of a school place if the child’s home address is subsequently found to be fraudulent. For reception place offers, the place may be withdrawn if 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.
6.14 **Catchment map**
The governors prioritise some school places on the basis of living within a designated catchment area. A map indicating the catchment boundary is available on the school website or Somerset Local Authority website [www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions) or a copy can be provided for viewing at the school office (see Section 1.2 Contact details).

6.15 **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**
In order for applications to be considered against criteria 6, applicants will need to complete the Supplementary Application Form (SIF) and attach any proof that is required. For first admission applications, the SIF will need to be submitted by the published closing date.

6.16 **Children of UK Service Personnel**
The Governors 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 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, a 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 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 Governors will process the application. If proof of 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;
