



## **WELFORD AND WICKHAM CE (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **Admissions Policy Academic Year 2025-2026**

#### **Vision Statement**

Every child will experience a rich, aspirational curriculum that stimulates their curiosity, broadens their perceptions of the world and creates a thirst for learning. They will be respectful, kind and responsible individuals who try their best through challenge and perseverance.

Welford and Wickham School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School, which is part of the Kite Primary Federation along with Stockcross School. As such the Federation's Governing Board is responsible for deciding on admissions to the School and the process is carried out in partnership with the West Berkshire LA in accordance with the Primary Admissions Co-ordinated Scheme ("the Co-ordinated Scheme").

Welford and Wickham School has a distinctive Christian ethos, which is at the centre of school life. We provide an inclusive, supportive and caring environment, shaped by Christian values in which children can learn and flourish. We welcome applications from families of all faiths and none. We expect all in the School community to respect the Christian ethos of the school.

The governors have made every effort to ensure that these arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code 2021 and all relevant legislation, including that of infant class sizes and equal opportunities.

There are 15 places (the published number or PAN) available.

## 1. When children may start at Welford and Wickham:

1.1 Children who reach the age of five between 1 September 2025 and 31 August 2026 are eligible for a place at the school from the beginning of the Autumn Term 2025. Parents (**See note 1 below**) may defer entry until a child reaches compulsory school age (the term beginning in January, April or September after their fifth birthday). The school will hold the deferred place for the child provided it is taken up during the school year 2025-2026.

For children whose fifth birthday falls between 1 April 2026 and 31 August 2026 (summer-born children) parents who do not wish them to start school in school year 2025-26 but to be admitted to the Reception year in September 2026, should proceed as follows:

They should apply at the usual time for a place in September 2025 together with a written request that the child is admitted outside his or her normal age group to the Reception year in September 2026. NB parents would need to provide supporting reasons for seeking a place outside the normal age group and should discuss the position with the Executive Head Teacher as early as possible. The school will consider the request carefully and, if it is agreed (this should be clear before the national offer day), their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before any place is offered. They should then reapply in the normal way (no later than 15 January 2026) for a Reception place in September 2026.

If their request to defer is refused, the parents must decide whether to wait for any offer of a place in September 2025 (NB it will still be subject to the over-subscription criteria below) or to withdraw their application and apply in the second half of the summer term 2026 for a Year 1 place in September 2026. Parents should be aware that the Year 1 group may have no vacancies as it could be full with children transferring from the 2024-25 Reception Year group.

1.2 Until the child reaches compulsory school age, they may attend part-time. If parents wish to exercise this right, they should discuss detailed arrangements with the Executive Head Teacher.

1.3 If you are moving into the area when your child is already at school, and we offer a place, your child may start as soon as you move.

1.4 If you are moving your child from another school in the area, and we offer a place, while your child may start immediately that the place is offered, we recommend your child start at the beginning of the following half-term or term whichever is the closest.

1.5 Requests from parents for places outside a normal age group will be considered

carefully, e.g. for those who have missed education due to ill health. Each case will be considered on its own merits and circumstances. However, such admissions will not normally be agreed without a consensus that to do so would be in the pupil's best interests. It is recommended that parents discuss their wishes with the Executive Headteacher in advance of applying for a place. The governors may ask relevant professionals for their opinion on the case. It should be noted that if a place in the requested age group is refused, but one in the normal age group is offered, then there is no right of appeal.

## **2. Applications Procedure:**

The applications procedure is as follows:

All applications for entry to the Reception Year at Welford and Wickham School must be made using the application form of the parents' home local authority (the home LA), i.e. the local authority of their home address, which may not be West Berkshire. Completed forms must be returned to the home LA by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

The dates and process of application will be in accordance with the Coordinated Admissions Scheme timetable, published by the home LA. The West Berkshire timetable is detailed at the end of this policy.

Information provided on application forms will be collated by the home LA using an equal preference system and any applications for West Berkshire schools passes to West Berkshire. West Berkshire will then pass information on applications for Welford and Wickham School to the school. Written offers of places will be sent out by the home LA on behalf of the Governing Board on the date indicated in that LA's timetable (16<sup>th</sup> April 2025 for West Berkshire residents) based on this ranking.

If your child is offered a place you must accept it in writing by the date indicated and, in the manner, described on the offer letter.

## **3. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

Children with an EHC naming Welford & Wickham School will always be admitted at any time, above any other child, including those on the waiting list. Such children are considered before over-subscription criteria against the admission number in the normal admission round.

## **4. How many children we offer places to:**

The published admission number for entry to the Reception Year in 2025/26 is 15. Other year groups also have 15 places. This is the number of pupils that the Governing Board considers to be the maximum appropriate number of children in each year group. If the

number of applications we receive means that this number would be exceeded then we use the criteria below to rank the applications.

#### **5. How we will decide whether to offer your child a place if we are oversubscribed:**

Children with an EHCP naming Welford and Wickham School will always be offered places (see section 3 above). If the number of applications is greater than the number of places, we rank applications by applying oversubscription criteria as set out below:

(a) Looked-after children and children who were previously looked after, including those children who appear to have been in state care outside England, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after, they became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order (**See Note 2 below**)

(b) Children (or a parent) who have exceptional medical or social needs that make it essential that they attend Welford and Wickham CE Primary School rather than any other. These needs must be fully supported by written evidence from the appropriate professional person involved with the family (**See Note 3 below**)

(c) Children with a normal home address in the school catchment area (**See note 4 below**) and with a sibling (**See note 5 below**) on the roll of the school at the time of application or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at the school and who is expected still to be in attendance at Welford and Wickham School at the time of entry to the school. The school catchment area is shown on the attached map (the darkest line) with a large-scale copy of the map being available for inspection at the school.

(d) Children with a normal home address in the school catchment area (**See map below**).

(e) Children with a normal home address outside the catchment area (**see map below**) and who have a sibling (**See note 5 below**) on the roll of the school at the time of application or whose parent has accepted an offer of a place at the school and who is expected still to be in attendance at the time of entry to the school.

(f) Children of teachers and teaching assistants who have been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made; or where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

(g) All other children.

## **6. Tie-breaker:**

Priority will be given within any of the above over-subscription criteria to the applicant whose normal home address is nearest to the school. Proximity of the child's home, as measured by the straight-line distance (**See Note 6**) between the home and the school with those living nearer being accorded the higher priority, will serve to differentiate between children in criteria (a) to (g) should the need arise. In the event that two or more applicants meet the same admission criteria and the measured distances (**using the method described in Note 6**) between home and school are identical to three decimal places, the school will use random allocation to decide which child should be offered the place. The process will be conducted in the presence of a person independent of the school.

In cases where there is one place available, and the next child on the list is a twin triplet etc., we would admit both twins (and all the children in the case of other multiple births) even if this meant exceeding the agreed admission number or the number of places available in a year group.

## **7. Waiting Lists:**

Waiting lists will be maintained for all year groups where necessary for children not offered a place at Welford and Wickham. Placement will be determined by applying the over-subscription criteria. They will remain until 1 September 2025 when parents will be asked to confirm in writing their wish to be placed on a newly constructed waiting list. Names will be removed from the lists if requested or if the offer of a place that becomes available is not accepted. Positions on waiting lists may change due to new applications or revised applications in respect of a change of preferred schools, and precedence is given to those subjects to a direction or an admission in accordance with the In-Year Fair Access Protocol (available from West Berkshire and the School).

## **8. Late Applications and applications outside the normal admissions round:**

Late applications and applications outside the normal admission round are considered as detailed in the Co-ordinated Scheme. Applications received after the deadline for receipt will only be considered after all those received within the deadline. This means that if no places are left after considering applications received within the deadline, the late application will be unsuccessful, even if the child fulfils a higher criterion than that under which places have been offered. The oversubscription criteria detailed in section 5 above will apply to late and in year admissions. The Governing Board's Admissions Committee will be informed of in year applications.

## **9. Appeals:**

Any parent not offered a school place at the school has the right of appeal to an independent appeals panel. Details are available from the school. Information on how to appeal will be provided with the result of the application. Appeals should be lodged within 20 school days from the date of the refusal letter. It should be noted that, in the event of an unsuccessful appeal, the school does not consider any further application in the same school year unless there is a significant change of circumstances (e.g. change of address).

## **10. Admissions in the previous year:**

For Admissions for Academic Year 2023/24, Welford and Wickham CE Primary School had 17 applications, of which 8 were successful under the following criteria:

Two admitted under criterion d, one admitted under criterion e, one admitted under criterion f and four admitted under criterion g.

## **11. Visits:**

You are welcome to visit the school; every day is open day.

## **12. Further Information:**

For further information, in the first instance, please contact the School Office. Contact details are as follows:

Address: The School Secretary  
Welford and Wickham CE (Aided) Primary School  
Welford Road  
Wickham  
Newbury  
Berkshire  
RG20 8HL

Telephone: 01488 608306

Email: [office@Welford.w-berks.sch.uk](mailto:office@Welford.w-berks.sch.uk)

Also visit our website:

<https://welfordandwickhamprimaryschool.org>

See also Local Authority admissions information on:

[www.westberks.gov.uk/primaryadmissions](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/primaryadmissions)

The Governors will apply the admissions policy fairly within the criteria set out in this policy and the Equality Policy. Children with special educational needs (but no Education and Health Care Plan) and those with challenging behaviour will be treated equally. The Governors have made every effort to ensure that this policy complies with all relevant legislation including that on infant class sizes.

## NOTES

### Note 1

*“Parent” is defined in law (The Education Act 1996) as either:*

- *any person who has ‘parental responsibility’ (defined in the Children Act 1989) for the child or young person; or*
- *Any person who has care of the child or young person.*

*If you are in any doubt, please contact the school for advice.*

### Note 2

*By a “looked-after child” we mean one in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. Previously looked after children are children who have been adopted, subject to child arrangement orders or special guardianship orders. Adopted children are those for whom an adoption order is made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A ‘child arrangements order’ is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14). A ‘special guardianship order’ is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A). Applications under this criterion must be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order). Evidence that a child from outside England was previously in state care will be required to come within this criterion. A child is regarded 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.*

### Note 3

*When applying under criterion b (exceptional medical or social needs), you must include supporting evidence from an independent professional person who is aware of the situation and supports your reasons for preferring Welford & Wickham School. This supporting evidence must clearly demonstrate why the school is the most suitable and must illustrate the difficulties that would be caused if your child had to attend another school. The person supplying the evidence should be a doctor, health visitor, social worker, etc. who is aware of your child’s or your own case. The school reserves the right to ask*

*for further evidence or clarification where necessary and may seek the advice of appropriate educational professionals where necessary.*

#### **Note 4**

*By normal home address, we mean the child's home address. This must be where the parent or legal carer of the child lives with the child unless it is proved that the child is resident elsewhere with someone else who has legal care and control of the child. The address should be a residential property that is owned, leased or rented by the child's parent/s or person with legal care and control of the child.*

*To avoid doubt, where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week or month, the address where the child lives will be determined having regard to a joint declaration from the parents stating the exact pattern of residence. If the residence is not split equally, then the relevant address used will be that at which we are satisfied that the child spends the majority of the school week. Where there is an equal split or there is any doubt about residence, we will make the judgment about which address to use for the purpose of determining whether or not to offer a place. We will take into account, for example, the following:*

- any legal documentation confirming residence*
- the pattern of the residence*
- the period of time over which the current arrangement has been in place*
- confirmation from any previous school of the contact details and home address supplied to it by the parents*
- where the child is registered with his/her GP*
- Any other evidence the parents may supply to verify the position.*

*We may ask for evidence of the normal home address in the form of a recent bill. This could be, for example, the most recent Council Tax bill, utility bill no more than three months old, a current TV licence, buildings and contents insurance, mortgage statement or rent book which shows the address concerned. Parents who are unable to provide this evidence should contact the school to discuss what evidence might be acceptable. If it becomes clear or if there is any doubt that the parents and child are not living at the address given on the application form, the school may seek further evidence. The school works closely with the LA to ensure that places are not obtained at the school on the basis of false addresses, and, in cases of doubt, will take steps to verify the information provided. If a place at the school is offered, and it later becomes clear that the offer was made on fraudulent or misleading information (e.g. a false claim to living in the catchment area), and the school has denied a place to a child with a stronger claim, the school will withdraw the offer of a place. The offer can also be withdrawn even after the child has started at the school.*

*We regard a child's home address to be where he or she sleeps for the majority of the school week (Monday to Friday). We may ask to see official documentation, such as a child benefit book or medical card if there are reasons why a child does not live at his or her*



parent's address. For example, if he or she is resident with a grandparent, this needs to be made clear on the application form. If such arrangements are not declared or a relative's address is used on the application, we may consider that a false declaration has been made, and withdraw the offer of a place. Childcare arrangements are **not** sufficient reason for listing another address.

If parents move house after the application has been made, but before any offer of a place has been made, the school must be informed.

If parents are moving, we will ask for evidence of the move, when considering any application for a place.

We would not accept an address where the one given is that of a second home with the main home being elsewhere. If there are two or more homes, we will check which is the main home, and may refuse to base an allocation of a place on an address which might be considered only temporary. Nor would we accept an address where the child was resident other than with a parent or carer unless this was part of a fostering or formal care arrangement. We would not normally accept an address where only part of a family had moved, unless connected with a divorce or permanent separation arrangement, in which case we would require proof.

#### **Note 5**



By sibling we mean a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, stepbrother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom the school place is sought is living in the same family unit at the same address as that sibling. It is helpful if parents make it clear on the application form where the sibling has a different family name. Where there is more than one sibling at the school, only the youngest should be listed on the application form.

#### **Note 6**

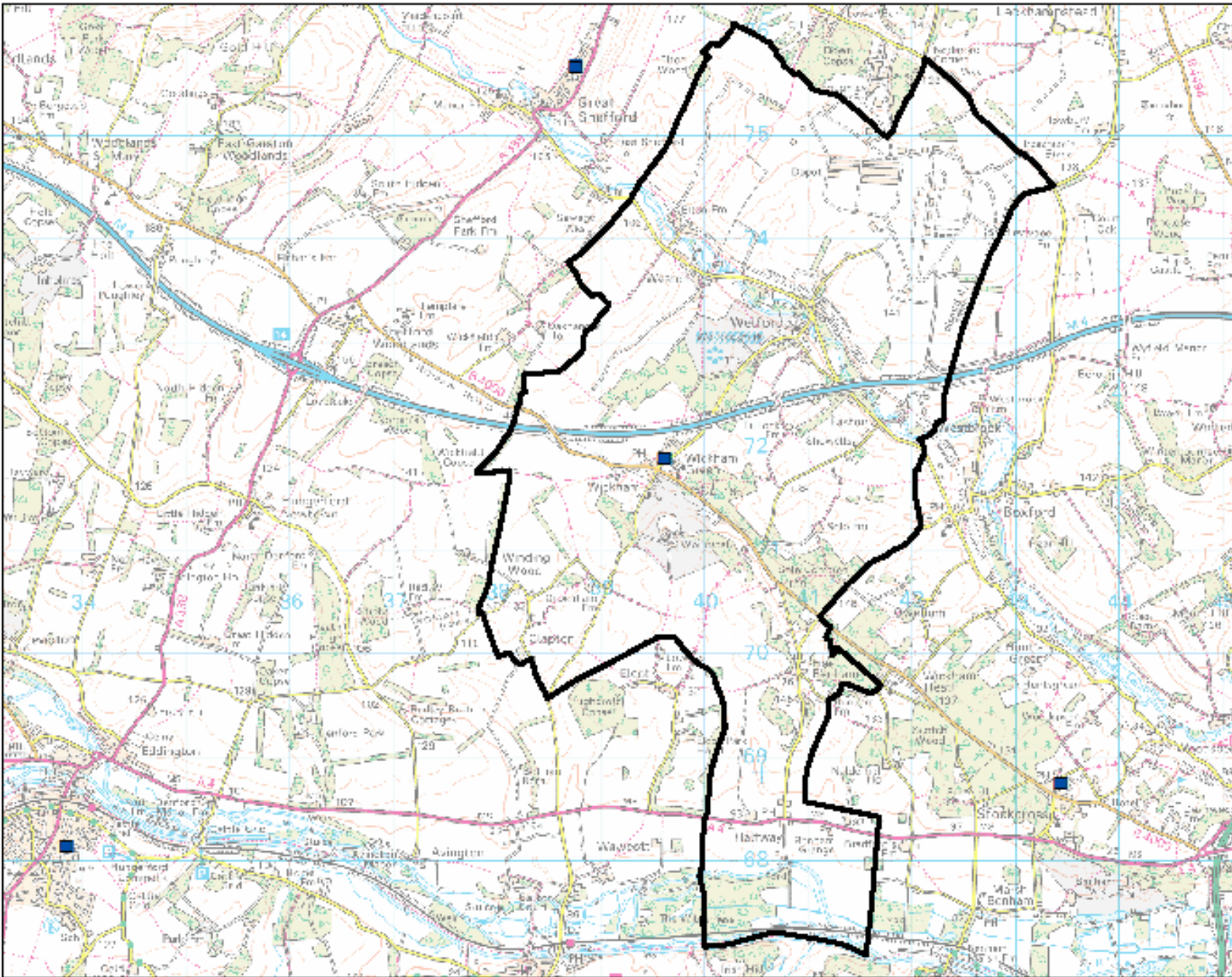
The straight line distance used to determine proximity of the home to the school will be measured by WBC LA's Geographical Information System as described in the WBC LA admissions booklet.

### **West Berkshire Coordinated Admissions Scheme Timetable**

15 January 2024	Closing date for applications
16 February 2024	LA transfer of applications data to VA Governing Bodies (Additional data received later from other LAs will be transferred for inclusion)
5 March 2024	West Berkshire VA Governing Bodies' ranked lists to the LA
17 April 2024	Offers and refusals issued to parents
1 May 2024	Parents' acceptance of offer
21 May 2024	Closing date for appeals

Executive Head Teacher	Sign & Date:	 28 September 2023
Chair of Governing board	Sign & Date:	 28 September 2023

# Welford & Wickham CE Primary School



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