



The Castle School

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School Admission Arrangements for 2016/17 Academic Year

Part 1 - General Information

1.1 About our School

The Castle School is an 'outstanding' school (OFSTED 2009) with a record of high attainment and achievement that has been sustained over a number of years. We foster a supportive, family atmosphere and a strong sense of belonging for every student. Our aim is for every child to achieve, participate and belong, and this is at the heart of everything we do at The Castle School. We have been for some years now not only at the top of the performance tables in Somerset but in the top 5% of schools nationally for academic achievements. We believe in the absolute moral responsibility we have for equipping students with the best possible exam results; we know that this opens doors for students and equips them with outstanding attitudes and a strong moral foundation.

Equally important is nurturing every student's potential beyond the curriculum and we aim that every child participates in enrichment activities. This success is not simply the result of the outstanding teaching at The Castle School, but the strong family ethos and sense of belonging that we engender. The Arts are an essential part of our school; we know that the UK leads in the creative industries and we have an outstanding reputation in all the Arts at both regional and national level. We are equally proud of our sporting reputation and many of our students to compete at regional and national level in a huge range of sports. We invariably win a good number of county cups and regional leagues as a school.

The Houses, (Balmoral, Buckingham, Caernarvon, Lancaster, Sandringham and Windsor) are the lifeblood of the School and ensure that every child has a strong sense of identity and belonging. They play a major role in ensuring that we never lose sight of the individuality of each child and that no child is invisible at The Castle School.

The Governing Body is the Admissions Authority and is responsible for all admission decisions. For this purpose, the governors operate an Admissions Committee consisting of at least three governors.

The Castle School has formed The Castle Partnership Trust and expects families to apply for a place at the school within the Trust that is in their catchment area. For example, if a child lives within the Court Fields School catchment area, it is expected that the family would apply for a place at Court Fields School.

Somerset Local Authority (LA) is responsible for coordinating all normal entry school place applications for maintained schools across Somerset. Therefore, these admission arrangements should be read in conjunction with the LA's published coordinated admissions scheme which is available at www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions or by contacting the Admissions and Entitlement Team at Somerset County Council.

1.2 Contact Details

The Castle School
Wellington Road
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 5AU

Telephone: 01823 274073

Fax: 01823 274080

E-Mail: office@castle.somerset.sch.uk

Website: www.castleschool.co.uk

1.3 The Published Admission Number (PAN)

Statutory PAN applies for the year of entry (year 7) and this indicates the number of places available. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, the governors may increase the PAN from time to time without further consultation. Any change will be clearly notified on the school website and appended to these admission arrangements.

The statutory PAN set for the 2016/17 academic year are:

Year 7 **240** (an admission limit of **237** applies for years 8 –11)

1.4 Relevant Documents

(Please refer to this information before applying for a school place)

School Admission arrangements must comply with The School Admissions Code and School Admission Appeals Code published by The Department for Education www.education.gov.uk.

Important documents published by Local Authorities are also 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 Local Authority Secondary Admissions Guide
- The Local Authority Fair Access Protocol
- The Local Authority School Transport policy

- Free School Meal Entitlement.

Part 2 - Over Subscription Criteria

2.1 The School Admissions Code requires the governors to admit any children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Statement of Special Educational Needs naming The Castle School, before the consideration of any other applications, for which the following procedure will apply:

2.2 Where there are more applications than there are places available within the required year group, the governors will consider all applications received against the following oversubscription criteria. This will enable the governors to rank children according to priority and identify those children who could be allocated a place. Where there are fewer applications than places available within the PAN for year 7, no child would be refused.

2.3 Over Subscription Criteria

1. **Looked After Children and previously Looked After Children.** (A Looked After Child is a child who is in the care of a Local Authority or being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions at the time of making an application to a school. Previously Looked After Children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so when they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.)
2. **Children living in the designated catchment area with a sibling attending The Castle School at the time of application** (see sections 6.6 and 6.13).
3. **Children of staff employed at The Castle School** (Children of staff at the school either where the member of staff has 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 the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.)
4. **Other children living in the designated catchment area at the time of application** (see sections 6.13).
5. **Children living outside the designated catchment area with a sibling attending The Castle School at the time of application** (see sections 6.6 and 6.13).
6. **Children not satisfying a higher criterion.**

2.4 Tie Breaker:

If it is necessary to distinguish between children in a particular category priority will be determined on the basis of distances between home and the school. This will be measured in a direct line from the entrance of the residential dwelling to the school's blue establishment marker on Devon County Council's Geographical Information

System (GIS) with children closer to the school having a higher priority for admission. If the tie breaker is not sufficient to distinguish between applicants in a particular category, there will be a random ballot. This will be undertaken by the Devon School Admissions Service on behalf of the school by the operation of an electronic list randomizer. This may be in the presence of a school representative.

Part 3 – Transferring School to Year 7 for the First Time

- 3.1 The following information should be read in conjunction with the 2016 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 Parents must submit their application form for a child to transfer from primary to secondary education in September 2016 directly to the home Local Authority, to arrive no later than 23.59 hours on 31 October 2015. Applications after this date may be considered late and at a disadvantage compared with applications that were on time. Applications may be made using the 'Common Application Form' electronically (on line) or by completing a paper application form available from the home Local Authority. If parents know that they are going to move into the area during the Year 6 for their child, they do not need to wait until they have actually moved (if this is after the offer of places on 1 March 2016) but will need to provide evidence of their new address.
- 3.3 Where appropriate, the home Local Authority will transfer application forms to the Local Authority in which area the preferred school is located. Applications received for The Castle School will be forwarded to the Governing Body Admissions Committee whose members will rank every application according to these published admission arrangements.
- 3.4 Parents can apply for a place after the closing date of 31 October 2015, but their application may not be considered until after all of the applications that were received on time. Under the Somerset Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme 2016-17, if parents could not apply on time, for example, if they move to the area after 31 October 2015 but before 1 December 2015, parents will need to inform the Local Authority. If the reason for applying after the closing date is accepted, the application will be considered at the same time as everyone who did apply on time if this is still possible.
- 3.5 The governors' ranking decisions will be notified to Somerset Local Authority in accordance with the authority's 'Coordinated Admissions Scheme' timetable and the home Local Authority will then inform parents of individual decisions on 1 March **2016** by email or letter post.

Part 4 - Admission to Any Year Group During the 2016/17 Academic Year (In-year Admission)

- 4.1 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. The application form is available to download from the school website, or a copy can be provided upon request at the school office.
- 4.2 Applications will be considered by the Governors' Admissions Committee and applicants will receive a response within 10 school days. If a place is offered it will be held open for 10 school days, during which time applicants will need to confirm acceptance of the offer and arrangements made to start attending. Where the request is for the student'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 (see 6.12).
- 4.3 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).
- 4.4 Where the requested chronological age year group is oversubscribed, the governors will carefully consider whether an additional student 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, 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).
- 4.5 All Local Authorities are legally required to operate a Fair Access Protocol across their area – all schools and academies are required to co-operate with that protocol. This ensures that all children who are vulnerable, unable to access an appropriate school place under the standard admission arrangements for the area have an admissions safety net. It is for the LA to consider whether the child should be considered under the LA's Fair Access Protocol. 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 against the governors' decision to refuse a place at The Castle 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 the decision letter.
- 5.2 An appeal timetable will be published on the school website. This sets out the timeframe for the various stages in the appeal process and includes statutory dates by which appeals must be heard.

- 5.3** For appeals at the normal round of admissions to Year 7 appeals will be heard within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals (for the 2016-17 intake, this is **12 April 2016**). Where the application was not made in time for a decision to be made on **1 March 2016**, appeals will be heard within that 40 day period. For in-year admissions in any academic year, appeals must be heard within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged.

Part 6 – Important Information

6.1 Waiting Lists

The governors operate waiting lists for year groups 7 - 11. 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. If a place becomes available within the Published Admission Number or other admission limit, this will be offered for the highest ranked child at that time. It is possible that a child's name could go down on a list as well as up, as other children may meet a higher oversubscription criterion.

6.2 Applications for Students to be Enrolled in a Year Group other than Chronological Age

The governors will consider applications on a case by case basis for 'retained' or 'accelerated' entry in circumstances where parents would like their child to be admitted to a year group either side of their chronological age year group. The reasons for the request must be fully explained in writing and submitted in conjunction with a school place application form.

6.3 Multiple Birth Applications (for example twins)

In the case of multiple birth applications, where at least one of the siblings could be offered a place, the governors will admit all of the siblings wherever possible (the sibling definition still applies).

6.4 Children from Overseas

Governors will not make a decision that could influence whether the child is allowed to enter the United Kingdom. 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 6.9). 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.

6.5 Looked After Children

A Looked After Child is a child who is in the care of a Local Authority or being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions at the time of making an application to a school. Previously Looked After Children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so when they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

6.6 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, a step-brother or sister, or children of the same household at the time of application'. For applications to transfer from primary to secondary school, siblings must be on roll at The Castle School between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016. For applications at any other time (in-year admissions) siblings must be attending The Castle School at the time of application.

6.7 Children of Staff at the School

Children of staff at the school either where the member of staff has 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 the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

6.8 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.

6.9 Home Address

The school will not accept more than one address as the child's home address. The terms of a residency order may clarify the home address.

Where necessary to determine which address to recognize and in the absence of a residency order, the school will consider the home address to be with the parent with primary day to day care and control of the child. In reaching this decision, evidence will be requested to show the address to which any Child Benefit is paid and from which the child is registered with a medical GP. Any other evidence provided by parents will also be considered by the school in reaching a decision on the home address for admissions purposes.

This may be necessary for instance where parents do not agree on the child's home address. Parents are urged to reach agreement or seek a Specific Issues Order from a court to decide which parent should or should not pursue an application. Where they do not, the school will determine the home address.

Where we ask for evidence of the address from which a child would attend school, this would usually be written confirmation of a house purchase or a formal tenancy agreement. We recognise that some families may be unable to provide this, for example, where a house move is a very short notice or where a family is escaping domestic violence. If you cannot provide this evidence, please contact us. We do not intend to penalise families where there is a genuine reason why the usual evidence cannot be provided.

6.10 Distance Measurements

At the time of determination, we receive additional admissions support from the Devon Schools Admissions Service, including distance measurement. This will be based on Devon LA's Geographical Information System, an electronic mapping system. Should this arrangement not be renewed, alternative provision will be made to measure using an equivalent system. Where two children live in a block of flats, they will be deemed to live at an equal distance from the school.

6.11 Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan

Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) 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 names The Castle School.

6.12 Withdrawing an Allocated Place

The governors will require parents to confirm within 10 school days (of the date of the offer letter) their acceptance of any place offered and to have made arrangements for their child to start attending The Castle School. 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/young person 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/young person's home address is subsequently found to be fraudulent.

6.13 Catchment Map

The governors prioritise some school places on the basis of living within a designated catchment area. Details of the catchment boundaries can be found at www.somerset.gov.uk/education-learning-and-schools/choosing-a-school/check-catchment=school1/ and at www.devon.gov.uk/schoolareamaps or in Appendix 1. Alternatively, a map can be provided by contacting the school office (see Section 1.2 Contact details). For applications to transfer from primary to secondary school, children must be living in the designated catchment area on the application closing date (31 October 2015). For applications at any other time (in-year admissions) children must be living in the designated catchment area at the time of application.

6.14 Fair Access Protocol

All LAs are legally required to operate a Fair Access Protocol across their area – all schools are required to co-operate with that protocol. This ensures that children who are vulnerable, unable to access an appropriate school place under the standard admission arrangements for the area have an admissions safety net.

We participate in Somerset's Fair Access Protocol.

6.15 Transport

All parents should consider how their child will get to school for the whole of their time on roll. Parents are advised not to rely on lifts, car shares or public service vehicles always being available. Supported transport will be provided by the LA for those Somerset-resident children attending this school if it is either the designated school for

the home address or the closest school which was available when the parent could apply. The home address must be further than a walking distance of three miles (for children aged 8 years old and over) from the school. Please note that our admissions direct line measurement policy does not apply to Somerset's school transport decisions.

6.16 Extended Schooling

Further information on extended schooling beyond the normal school day is available from the school office and our website.

6.17 Home-School Agreement

Admission to any school is not conditional on signing a home-school agreement. However, we will offer this to all parents after children have been admitted as we consider agreements to be a positive way of promoting greater involvement between parents in their child's education.

6.18 Documentary Evidence

Once a place has been offered to a child, evidence of the child's identity may be requested – usually a short birth certificate. This may not be necessary where the child has been on roll at another school in England which can confirm that evidence has been seen at that school. The school may also request evidence that a child's address is genuine or that the person who made an application for admission was legally permitted to do so.

6.19 School Fees and Charges

There is no charge for applying for a place here, for admission or for the provision of education. We will not request donations before or during the admissions process and any donations made to the school following admission are entirely voluntary. No activities such as school visits are compulsory. A policy on charging for activities is available on request from the school office and can be viewed on our website.

6.20 Further Information

Somerset School Admissions Team

schooladmissions@somerset.gov.uk

Telephone 0845 456 4038

Somerset County Council policies

www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/policies/school-admissions-policy

Devon School Admissions Service

admissions@devon.gov.uk

Telephone contact through *My Devon* on 0345 155 1019

School Appeals

Telephone contact through *My Devon* on 0345 155 1019

Clerk to the Independent Appeals Panel, County Hall, Exeter, EX2 4QG

www.devon.gov.uk/admissionappeals

Education Transport Team
transport@somerset.gov.uk
Telephone 0845 345 9155

The Department for Education (DfE)
Telephone 0870 000 2288
www.education.gov.uk

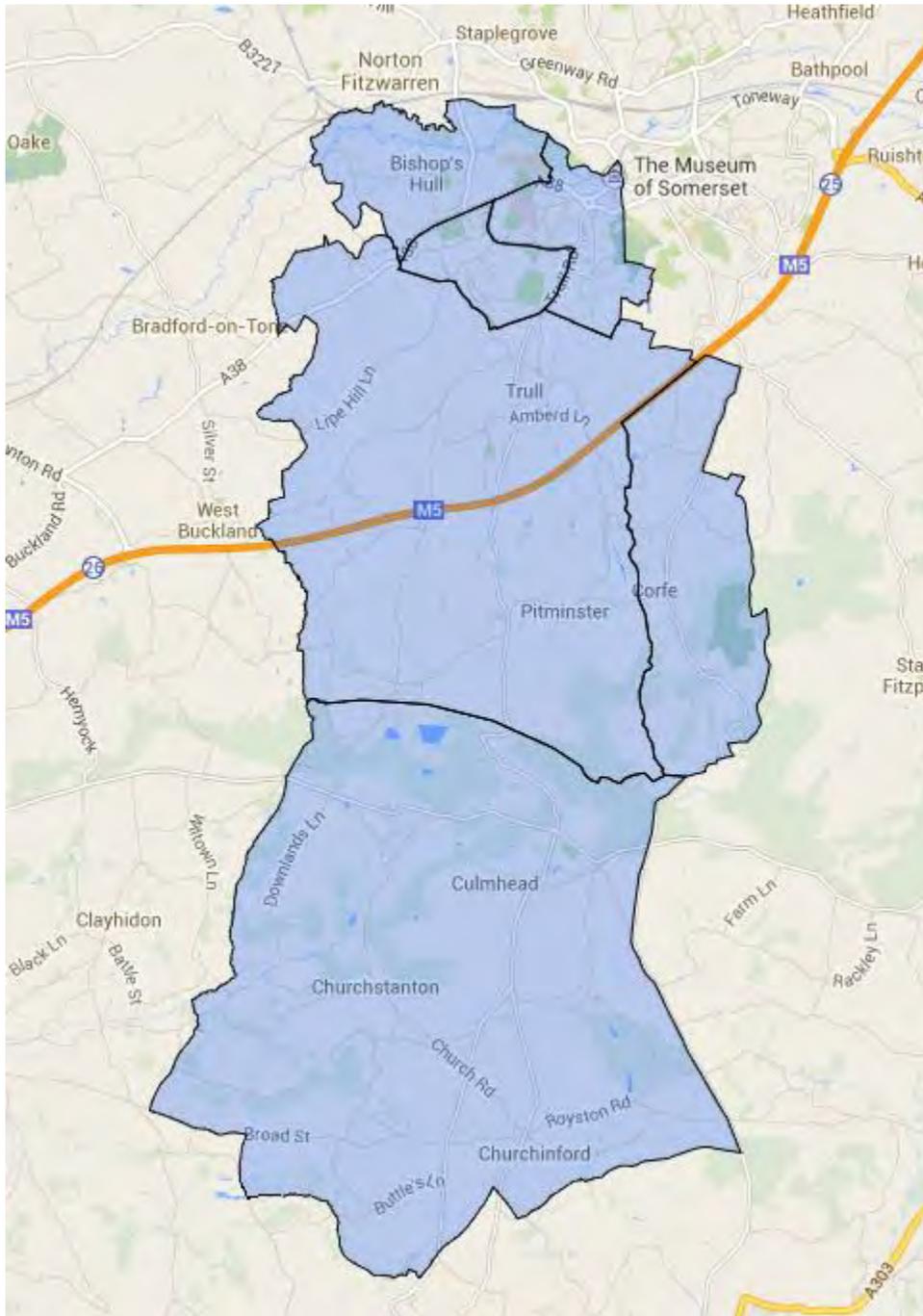
The Education Funding Agency (EFA) - Bristol
Freshford House, Redcliffe Way, Bristol BS1 6NL
Telephone 0370 000 2288
www.education.gov.uk/b00199952/educationfundingagency

Office of the Schools Adjudicator
Telephone 01325 735303
www.education.gov.uk/schoolsadjudicator

Children's Education Advisory Service
Telephone 01980 618244
Trenchard Lines, Upavon, Pewsey, Wiltshire SN9 6BE
enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk

Policy Version

This policy was determined by the School in April 2015. It will be reviewed annually by the School following a consultation hosted by Devon County Council at
www.devon.gov.uk/admissionarrangements



APPENDIX 1
Catchment Area Map