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Frequently asked questions

What are your fees?

As a state funded school, we have no school fees. We will ask for voluntary contributions towards activities though.

My child does not speak German or French (or English), can he/she still go to your school?

Most children are able to pick up another language. Some will need longer than others, but in general, if a child starts at our school in Reception or even year 1, they will pick it up at school. If you want your child to start in a later year, we advise you to make an appointment with us first to discuss the implications. It is not impossible, but it will be hard work for both the child and the parents.

We live outside of Oxfordshire, can we obtain a place?

It is not very likely, as we have a waiting list for each year. After sibling priority, our only admission criterion is the location. If you are outside of Oxfordshire, the likelihood that you are the closest person to one of our nodal points is very slim. However, you can apply and change your address to a local one as soon as you have a proof of address. Please send this proof the county council, not to the school, though.

My child is bilingual French already. Does he/she have priority?

No, language or culture is not one of our admissions criteria. As a state-funded school, we look at all applications on an equal footing.

I work for the European Commission, does my child have priority?

Our school is subject to national admissions rules in the UK and has no bilateral agreement with the European Commission or Agencies.

How and when do I apply?

A child in the UK starts the September after his/her 4th birthday in Reception (or Foundation in some schools). The deadline for this Reception application is **mid-January**. You need to apply to your local County Council, which in most cases will be Oxfordshire County Council:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/admissions-primary-infant-and-junior-schools>

For a September in an older year-group, the applications are around **the first week of June**:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/transferring-or-moving-school>

If you move to the area during the course of the school year, you can fill in this same form at any time.

I did not obtain a place, but my friend in Didcot did, and I'm sure that we live closer to the school.

At all times, we keep the balance of the nodal points as close as possible to 50/30/10/10%.

This means that you cannot compare your distance to the distances of people that have entered via another nodal point than yours. For example, if someone lives 5 miles from nodal point 3, but is the closest to that nodal point, they can have a higher ranking than someone who lives at 1.3 miles from Oxford, but has 15 people living closer to the nodal point in Oxford.

I do not understand how the nodal points work. Can you give an example please?

When we receive the list with applicants from the county council, they have used their super-computer to calculate each applicants distance from each nodal point:

		Node 1	Node 2	Node 3	Node 4
John Smith	Europa Lane 32	1.25 miles	5.69 miles	9.58 miles	15.20 miles
Lucie Brown	Ginger Brook 15	2.65 miles	22.36 miles	5.36 miles	22.69 miles
Reese White	The field 201, France	100 miles	100 miles	100 miles	100 miles

If it is an in-year application and we have 1 place, we will have to calculate which point we will need to fill. We will deduct the siblings and then calculate the balance in the class. The point that is out of balance, will need the new pupil. If we have to fill nodal point 2, we will look who lives closest to nodal point 2, in this case John Smith. If we have to fill nodal point 3, the place will go to Lucie Brown.

Reese White with an address abroad will never be the closest unless there are no people on the waiting list or if the people before him refuse the place. On average we have about 20 people on the waiting list for each year, so it's unlikely at the moment.

If it is for a reception place, where we have many places, we tell the county council which pupils are confirmed siblings (do not forget to put it on the form!). The super-computer from the county council does the rest. It actually does this: it first deducts the siblings. It then calculates how many places will be assigned to each nodal point and will proceed to do so. In order to be absolutely sure it is all done correctly, 2 people in the school do the calculations manually too (the principal and the person in charge of admissions). So far, the 3 results were always the same.

How do you determine who goes in which class (which language) for reception?

First, we determine a ranking from 1 to 84, where number 1 would be a sibling. After the siblings, we use the ranking determined by entry to give priority. We will then send out an e-mail to all applicants offered a place and ask for their first and second preference. We then go down the list and offer applicant number 1 their preference, then number 2, etc, until a class is full. When a class is full, we give the next person their second preference. When 2 classes are full, the rest goes to the third class.

So it is possible that we offer a French child a place in the Spanish class. Please remember that as a state funded school, we cannot make any decisions based on background and culture, and this is the only unbiased way we can make this decision.

My child is German, surely you will only offer a place for the German class in year 4?

Even though this is the way the European School has always worked, as a state school we do not make any differentiation based on background or culture, or even language knowledge in primary. If a place comes up in the French class, and your child has priority, we will offer the place to your child. If you accept it, we expect the parents and child to be fully behind the decision and challenge to tackle this language, and we will provide in-school support to help your child succeed.

If you do not wish up take the place up, you can turn it down, while remaining on the waiting list.

If we have a place in both classes, we will ask the applicant with the highest priority (based on the admissions ranking) for their preference. We will offer the other place to the lower ranking successful applicant. This means it can happen, that a child that speaks English only, but has a higher admissions ranking will take up the place in the German class, while we offer a child that only speaks German, with the lower ranking, a place in the French class. It is always up to the parents to accept or decline the place of course.

Can I accept the place, but remain on the waiting list for the other class?

The simple answer is – no-. We do not have a waiting list for the other class. When a child enters a class, but does not speak the language, the school invests a lot in helping the child get to the right level. It will only really work, if the child and family are behind the language and fully supportive. The child will be less motivated, if it is seen as a temporary waiting stage until a place comes up in the other class. It will also be disruptive for the other pupils in both classes.

It is possible to withdraw your child and reapply to the school. It has happened in the past that the governors have allowed a change in reception and year 1 to avoid the parents from actually doing so, where the person that wished to move had a clear priority over anyone else on the continued interest list.