




Policy Directive

CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH A PARENT/CARER REQUEST FOR AN OUT OF CATCHMENT AREA/PARTNER SITE (OCAPS) PLACEMENT MAY BE AGREED

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Summary of Changes¹ from Previous Versions

Version no/Date	Change	Comment	Section/ Page
V2.9 (Aug 2024)	Annual refresh	Abbreviation renamed as OCAPS across all admissions policies. Additional sections added relating to applications made on the grounds of bullying and on the circumstances when requests are not normally granted	Throughout
V2.8 (June 2023)	Annual refresh	Application window added. Les Varendes High School added as updated school name.	Page 4 Page 4
V2.7 (Aug 2022)	Annual refresh	Cover page updated and contact updated to Head of Education Operations	Page 1 and page 4
V2.6 (Aug 2021)	Annual refresh	Cover page updated	n/a
V2.5 (Aug 2020)	Annual refresh	Minor changes to dates Change of nomenclature from “Education Services” to “the Committee <i>for</i> Education, Sport & Culture”	n/a
V2.4 (Aug 2019)	Annual refresh	Minor changes to dates	n/a

¹ Material changes only. Minor changes (such as to punctuation, grammar, etc.) will not be listed

1.0 Introduction

The Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture's Primary and Secondary Admissions Policies state that if parents wish to request a placement in a school other than the catchment school, or, the Secondary School Site (Partner Site), they need to explain why it would be unreasonably detrimental for their child's education to attend the allocated school.

Circumstances where it might be appropriate to request a change of school are described below along with information about the circumstances in which requests are not normally granted. Decisions in each case will be taken with regard to all the circumstances submitted by the parents and such other relevant factors as the School Admissions Team is aware of. Placements will be determined by the School Admissions Team, acting on the Committee's behalf and will take account of the impact on the efficiency and viability of schools across the education system.

Applications will only be granted where there is space available within the planned intake capacity for that particular school.

Where applications are received during school holidays it might not be possible to confirm the decision until schools return. This is to ensure that schools are ready to receive children and to enable a smooth transition for the learner.

1.1 Applications in respect of children with medical, psychological or specific social needs

The circumstances described in the application must relate to the child, and parents/carers will be expected to provide supporting evidence from a recognised Health or Social Care professional. The evidence must support the case as to why a place at the catchment school/Partner School would be unreasonably detrimental to the child's education. If the School Admissions Team is satisfied that there is sufficient justification, an alternate place will be allocated.

1.2 Applications made where an elder sibling attends and will continue to attend the requested school during the next school year

In these circumstances, the case is normally considered to be made. The School Admissions Team is generally able to allow requests for siblings (where they are living in the same residence for at least 50% of the week) to attend the same school, subject to two conditions: the avoidance of unreasonable expenditure, and that space is available. Please note that -OCAPS requests on the basis of siblings attending Les Varendes High School will only be considered where the sibling is, or will be, within Years 7-11 at the time the younger child moves to that site (i.e. **not those in Years 12 and 13 attending the Sixth Form Centre**). These applications are specifically for situations where an elder sibling is attending a school and is not the case for younger siblings.

1.3 Applications made by school-based employees of the Committee for Education Sport & Culture

Some employees would find it difficult to work in a school-based environment where their child is a learner and similarly some children would not want to attend a school where a parent/carer worked. The School Admissions Team will approve a request from employees where there are strong grounds to believe that it would be unreasonably detrimental to their child's education for them to attend the catchment school. In such circumstances, it will be at the discretion of The Education Office to allocate the nearest appropriate school, subject to space and other considerations.

1.4 Applications made to avoid 'unreasonable' transport arrangements (Secondary level)

There may be some circumstances where, if a child was to attend the Secondary School Site partnered with their primary school, travel between school and home would be challenging. The Education Office will approve a request to attend an alternative Secondary School Site where it agrees that the transport arrangements that would be required to attend the established Partner Site would be unreasonably detrimental to the child's education.

1.5 Applications made on the grounds of bullying

It is expected that any such issues are raised with the school Headteacher/Principal or other Senior Leader in the first instance. Requests in these circumstances will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that reasonable efforts have been made, and a reasonable amount of time given, to work with the school to resolve concerns or issues.

1.6 Any other substantial reason

If parents/carers can present circumstances which clearly show it would be unreasonably detrimental to their child's education to attend the catchment school/Partner Site and The Education Office agrees with the facts as presented, such requests may be approved, subject to the avoidance of unreasonable expenditure and that space is available.

1.7 Circumstances in which OCAPS requests are not normally granted

Child-minding arrangements, convenience for parents'/carers' place of work and distance from school are **not** normally considered to be sufficient justification for granting OCAPS requests. However, there may be instances when demand for places at a particular school is higher than the number of places available, in which case such circumstances may be able to be considered.