

Admissions Criteria for Years 7-11 for Balcarras School September 2020

The number of intended admissions is 194 in Years 7 to 11.

Where applications for admission in Year 7 exceed the number of places available, places will be allocated according to the following criteria, applied in order:

1. Looked after children (i) or children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption (ii) child arrangement order (iii) or a special guardianship order (iv).
2. Children living in the school's area of priority who have a sibling attending the school where the sibling is or has been a member of Years 7-12 and who will continue to be on the school roll when the applicant's child is admitted. This criterion does not apply if the sibling has only attended Years 12-13.
3. Children of full or part time salaried members of staff who have been employed at Balcarras for two years or more at the time of the application for admission, or of a member of staff recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
4. Children living in the area of priority, served by the school (see map). If there are more children in the area of priority than places available, those with the strongest geographical claim, measured in a straight line from the ordnance survey address point of the child's home address (including flats) to the ordnance survey address point of the school, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.
5. Children who live outside the area of priority served by the school, who have a sibling attending the school where the sibling is or has been a member of Years 7-12 and who will continue to be on the school roll when the applicant's child is admitted. This criterion does not apply if the sibling has only attended Years 12-13.
6. Other children with the strongest geographical claim, measured in a straight line from the ordnance survey address point of the child's home address (including flats) to the ordnance survey address point of the school, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.

In the event of the oversubscription of any of the criteria, where there are two or more children living the same distance from the school, then a 'names in a hat' process will be undertaken by the Admissions' Authority, with the first name drawn being successful. If the school is oversubscribed, a waiting list will be held for (at least) the first school term (ie until December). The waiting list will be prioritised according to the school's oversubscription criteria. The school operates an appeals system in the event of oversubscription. Parents will be required to complete an

appeals form and will then be invited to attend a hearing held by an independent appeals panel.

The school has signed up to the In-Year Fair Access Protocols held by the Local Authority. Should a vulnerable child within these Protocols require a place at the school, they will take precedence over any child on the waiting list.

The school is required to admit a child with a statement of Special Educational Needs that names the school, where the attendance of the child would not be incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources.

Note 1.

i. 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) at the time of making an application to the school. In Gloucestershire, such children are referred to as Children in Care.

ii. This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).

iii. Under the provisions of section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amend section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders.

iv. See Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

Note 2.

A sibling is a brother or sister, half-brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step-brother or sister, or the child of the parent's/carer's partner, and in every case, the child must be living in the same family unit at the same address.

Note 3.

Full or part time salaried members of staff does not include staff employed on an ad-hoc or casual basis, eg examination invigilators, supply staff etc.

Note 4.

Where any particular category at points 1 – 5 is oversubscribed, criterion 6 (strongest geographical claim based on straight line distance) will be used to determine which child will be offered a place.

Note 5.

A waiting list will be maintained until the end of the first term in the academic year of admission. **All children on the waiting list will be ranked using the above criteria**, taking into account children added to the list after the start of September.

Note 6.

Any application for a place at Balcarras School made outside the normal year of entry to the school must be made directly to the school.

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Balcarras Sixth Form

Entry Criteria for Balcarras Sixth Form

The purpose of our entry criteria is to ensure that students embarking on courses at AS Level are academically able to complete the course and achieve satisfactory results. It is therefore sensible and necessary to specify that all examination grades submitted as part of the entry requirements are academically rigorous enough to ensure success at AS Level.

There is no requirement on location. Provided the potential student can guarantee that s/he will arrive punctually each day and can safely make her/his way home after the end of school then s/he will be eligible to apply for a place in the sixth form. We welcome applications from students new, or returning, to the Cheltenham area. Balcarras School hopes to welcome students who have a genuine enthusiasm to attend Balcarras Sixth Form, have a real passion for academic hard work and view Balcarras as their definite number one option for post 16 studies.

Balcarras School would like to positively encourage students to apply who currently attend a school without sixth form provision. We are determined to build on the excellent relationships and the firm commitment that exists between Balcarras Sixth Form and local schools.

Entry Criteria

The entry criteria for Balcarras Sixth Form are the same for Balcarras Students and for external students and are as follows:

1. Students must achieve at least 2 B grades and 3 C grades in full GCSE courses*.
2. Students must achieve a grade 5 or higher in GCSE Mathematics and English*. (Some subjects have additional entry criteria and for students applying for those subjects, the additional requirements are set out clearly in the sixth form brochure.)
3. Balcarras Sixth Form will admit up to 50 external students (with a minimum of 10) from other schools into Year 12. 160 students will be admitted to Year 12.
4. All applications must reach the school, fully completed, by February 5th on an official application form which can be downloaded from the school website (paper copies will be handed out during the sixth form open evening in January)

* Where a student is studying courses other than full course GCSE, then the student must contact the school to discuss what standards will be required.

Over Subscription

In the event that there are more than 50 applications from external students, then the applications will be given priority according to the following criteria:

1. Looked after children will have first priority
2. Students whose top 5 predicted full course GCSE scores* (A*=4, A=3, B=2, C=1) show a score above 12 (eg AABBB=12). The final grades achieved in the top 5 full course GCSEs must also be above 12 points.
3. Students applying for courses where the cohort size is predicted to be smaller than 12.
4. Students who have high predicted GCSE grades in the subjects they are applying to study at A level.

If, after the above criteria have been applied, there are still more than 50 eligible applications, then priority will be given to students applying for courses where class sizes do not exceed 20.

* Where a student is studying courses other than full course GCSE, then the student must contact the school to discuss what standards will be required.

The waiting list will only remain in use until September 30th.

Students will be notified by official letter to their home address of the decision. Any appeals must be made in writing to the Head of Sixth Form and must be received within 3 weeks of the decision letter being sent.
(policy effective September 2013 onwards)

Students with qualifications other than GCSEs

Balcarras Sixth Form will consider some non-GCSE courses. However, not all courses will be sufficiently equivalent to provide the necessary academic grounding for the A levels and study environment at Balcarras Sixth Form. For example, it is often not possible to directly compare foreign examinations grades with GCSE grades.

Offers will be made based on the examinations the student is due to take in the school he/she is studying and will be made on an individual basis. The offer will be

the decision of Balcarras School and be broadly comparable, as far as is possible, to the equivalent GCSE requirements set out at the top of this document.

Applicants who are studying courses other than GCSE are advised to check with the school on the suitability of their particular course(s).

Out of Year Group

Balcarras will always place pupils in the Year Group that matches their chronological age. The school does not move pupils to different Year Groups from their age group except in exceptional cases, where there is strong medical evidence to support the move. Where a pupil arrives in the country having been educated abroad, this will not be used as a reason for moving the pupil to a lower year group. Pupils arriving at Balcarras mid-year will be placed in the Year Group corresponding to their chronological age, independent of the year group they were in at their previous school.

In-Year Admissions

In-Year Applications

All In-Year applications must be completed using the In-Year application form that can be found on the Gloucestershire County Council website. Applications can only be accepted if all the sections of the form are fully and accurately completed. If any section is found to be deliberately completed incorrectly, this will render the application in-valid and may count against the applicant in future appeal hearings or placement decisions.

All applications will require proof of address and proof of date of birth. Applicants are advised to read the Gloucestershire County Council website advice on In-Year applications – “In Year Admissions Guidance Booklet”, before completing the application form. For proof of date of birth, applicants will be required to submit a good quality photocopy of either a passport or a birth certificate. For proof of address applicants will need to submit a good quality photocopy of their Council Tax Bill. If the photocopy is not sufficient, applicants will be required to bring in to school the original document. For applicants moving into the area, please read the “In-Year Admissions Guidance Booklet” for details of required supporting documentation.

If there is a suspicion by the school that the application (or parts of the application) might be fraudulent, the school can insist on additional documents being provided, before the application is processed.

The school will reply with a written letter to all applications within 30 school days of receiving the application (generally all applications are replied to in a much shorter period of time). If the application is for a year group which is already on or above PAN, the school cannot offer additional places, and so the Governing Body have decided that the Deputy Head will respond on their behalf, rejecting the application.

The letter will make clear the reason for refusing a place at the school and also outline the process for appeal, should the applicant wish to make an appeal.

If the application is rejected and the applicant has ticked the box indicating they wish to be added to the waiting list, then the pupil's name will be added to the waiting list maintained by the Deputy Head. All names will remain on the waiting list for a maximum of six weeks, and then the name will be removed from the waiting list.

If a place does become available in a particular year group, the Deputy Head will refer to the waiting list of applicants. If the waiting list still has "live applications" then places will be offered according to the entry criteria set out at the top of this policy. (Earlier applicants will not be given priority over later applications.) On 31st August, all waiting lists will be wiped clear, and a new waiting list will be started in the new academic year.

When this policy was reviewed, an equality impact assessment was conducted to ensure any changes did not have an adverse effect under the terms of the Equality Act 2010.