

ADMISSION POLICY 2023-24

Introduction

West Didsbury CE Primary School is a two form entry primary school for pupils aged 4-11 years. As a Church of England Free School, the school may admit up to 50% of the pupils to Reception each year on the basis of faith and at least 50% without reference to faith.

The Academy Trust is the admission authority for the school, and the school is required to act in accordance with the School Admissions Code. The admissions process is co-ordinated by Manchester City Council (the Local Authority) and the school liaises with the Local Authority and the Manchester Diocese on admissions issues. The following arrangements for admissions, which include the criteria used to determine the allocation of places when the school is oversubscribed.

Admissions Arrangements

- i) The school's published admission number (PAN) for the admission of pupils to Year R (Reception) is 60. If no more than 60 applications for admission to year R are received, all applicants will be offered places.
- ii) The school operates one point of admission, with one point of entry to Year R (Reception) in September each year.
- iii) Responsibility for admissions is delegated to the admissions Committee
- iv) The school will admit all children with an educational healthcare plan or a statement of special educational needs naming the school. (These admissions are made without reference to faith.)
- v) In the event of more applications for admission to the school being received than there are places available (after the admission of any pupils with an education health care plan or a statement of special educational needs naming the school) the following oversubscription criteria, in the order of priority shown, will be used to determine the allocation of places.

Oversubscription Criteria:

1. Children in public care and previously looked after children.
This includes any "looked after child", "previously looked after children" and any child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after

became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. see Appendix A)

2. A maximum of 30 places (50% of the admission number) by reference to faith, in the following order of priority
 - a. Children who, together with at least one parent/legal guardian, are in regular attendance at Sunday worship at St James and Emmanuel, Didsbury, Christ Church, West Didsbury, St Christopher's, Withington or St. Nicholas, Burnage.
 - b. Other children who, together with at least one parent/legal guardian are in regular attendance at public worship at a Church which is a member of Churches Together in England (see website for current list www.cte.org.uk)
3. Children who have a brother or sister (sibling) at the school at the time of admission.
4. Any other children, with those living closest to the school having priority for admission.

Right of Appeal

Where the governors are unable to offer a place because the school is oversubscribed, parents/carers will be advised of the reason why admission was refused and of their right to appeal to an independent admission appeal panel.

Parents wishing to appeal must set out their grounds for appeal in writing and must send the appeal to:

Independent School Appeals Service

PO Box 532
Town Hall
Manchester
M60 2LA
Tel: 0161 234 3038

If parents wish to appeal, they must set out their grounds for appeal in writing. An Independent Appeal Panel will be convened to hear such appeals.

Waiting List

When the school receives more applications than there are places available, the above admissions criteria will be used and children who are not admitted will have their names placed on a waiting list. The order of priority on the waiting list will be determined using the above admissions criteria. The date of application is not an admissions criterion, and any late applicants will be added to the waiting list using the above admissions criteria. This means for example that a child who moves into the area could have a higher priority on the waiting list than one who has been on the list for some time. Each time a child is added to the waiting list the priority order will be ranked again in line with the above admissions

criteria. If a place becomes available, the place will be offered to the child who is top of the list at that time.

The waiting list will be kept until at least the end of the Autumn Term of each admissions year.

Application documents and procedures

All applications for admission to Reception each year must be made on the Local Authorities common application form (CAF). In the September before a child is due to start school the Local Authority will inform parents that the application period is open. Parents can then apply online or request an application form from the Local Authority.

Applications from parents seeking a place for their child within Criterion 2 (a) or 2(b) should be supported by the schools Supplementary Application Form and Religious Leaders Reference Form. Parents are responsible for enclosing the completed Religious Leaders Reference Form with the schools Supplementary Information Form and returning these to the school. They must also complete the official Local Authority CAF and return this to the Local Authority. Applications not accompanied by the completed Religious Leaders Reference Form cannot be considered under Criterion 2(a) or 2(b), and this may reduce the chances of a child securing a place at the school if the school is oversubscribed.

Copies of the current admissions policy and arrangements are available to parents/carers on request.

Notification of decisions on admission applications and acceptance of places.

For admissions to year R (Reception), parents will be notified whether or not their child has been allocated a place at the school according to the Local Authority's timetable before the start of the school year in which their child is due to be admitted.

A written acceptance of the place along with the child's date of birth must be delivered to the school within 14 days of the offer of a place. If no response is received within this time it will be assumed that the place is no longer required. This place will then be offered to another applicant.

Deferred admission

Parents will be offered the option of deferring their child's entry until later in the school year. The place will be held for that child, but not beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the academic year for which the admission is sought.

In-year admissions

All in-year applications for admission (i.e. applications other than for admission to Reception in September each year) should be through enquiries at the school or via the Local Authority In Year Admissions Form which is available online at: www.manchester.gov.uk

Fraudulent applications

Where the governors discover that a child has been awarded a place as a result of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application (for example, a false claim to residence in the catchment area or of involvement in a place of worship) which effectively denies a place to a child with a stronger claim, then under the School Admissions Code the admission authority is able to withdraw the offer of the place. The application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

Admission outside the child's normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1.

Parents requesting admission out of the normal age group must put their request in writing, addressed to the Headteacher at the school, together with any supporting evidence that the parent wishes to be taken into account. The governors will make decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; any information provided about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. The governors will also take into account the views of the Headteacher. When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the governors will set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

Where the governors agree to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school) the local authority and governors must process the application as part of the main

admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible, and on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. The admission authority must not give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group.

Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

Objections to the determined admissions arrangements can be made to the Schools Adjudicator.

Appendix A

Definitions

- a. Children in public care and previously looked after children.

This includes any "looked after child", "previously looked after children" and any child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. 'Looked after' means that the child was (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.

This criteria also includes looked after children and all previously looked after children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989.)

- b. Siblings

For the purposes of this document a sibling is defined as a sister or brother (including step/half/foster) who is resident at the address, which is the same as that of the older sibling who is already in the school at the time of the younger sibling starting at the nursery or reception class.

The address should be the same as that of the brother or sister who will be a registered pupil at the school at the time when the younger sibling would be admitted to the school.

Sibling priority is not given to cousins or to brothers or sisters (including step/half/foster) who are resident at a different address.

Twins, triplets etc. Where there are children of multiple births wishing to be admitted and the sibling twin, triplet etc of the child with priority for the 60th place have applied for a place at the same time, the governors will admit the siblings as exceptions to the infant class size requirements under the School Admissions Code.

c. Regular attendance

Regular attendance means a minimum of fortnightly attendance at church at public worship for at least the year immediately prior to application for admission to the school. Verification of regular attendance of the child at public worship must be provided by a member of the clergy or other designated church officer. Applicants seeking admission under criteria 2 will need to complete and return the Supplementary Information Form available from the school.

d. The Parish of St James and Emmanuel, Didsbury

The parish is the Parish of St James and Emmanuel, Didsbury. A map of the parish can be viewed at the school. Residence in the parish refers to an address within the parish boundary.

Where the boundary is drawn down the centre of a road, residents living on the inner side are in the Parish; those on the outer side are not.

e. Churches Together in England

A list of churches in membership of Churches Together in England can be viewed at www.cte.org.uk

Tie-breaker

Where there are more applicants for the available places within a category, the distance to the child's normal home front door from the main gate of the school in a straight line

measured on a map will be used as the determining factor, nearer addresses having priority. The 'normal' home address of the child will be taken to be the home in which the child sleeps for the majority of the school week. Parents may be asked to show proof of address. For children of UK Service personnel and other Crown Servants returning to the area proof of the posting is all that is required.

Final Tie-breaker

If the distance from home to school does not distinguish between two or more applicants with equal priority for the remaining place, random allocation will be used as the final tie-breaker. This will be supervised by someone independent of the school.

Appendix B

Infant class size

Under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the School Admissions Code, infant classes (those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year) **must not** contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher. This limits the circumstances in which appeal committees may uphold an appeal where the child concerned has been refused a place because their admission would breach the infant class size limit.

Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an 'excepted pupil' for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The excepted children are:

- a) Children admitted outside the normal admissions round with statements of special educational needs or Education, Health and Care Plan specifying a school
- b) Looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round
- c) Children admitted, after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admission authority or local authority in the original application process
- d) Children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal
- e) Children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance
- f) Children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round
- g) Children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil

- h) Children with special educational needs who are normally taught in a special educational needs unit attached to the school, or registered at a special school, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school.