



# Admissions Policy

## Cheshire Academies Trust

Cheshire Academies Trust

This policy was written in November 2015 by the Trustees. The Board of Cheshire Academies Trust have adopted this policy at their meeting of 2 December 2015. It will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees.

Next review date: December 2016 (to review policy for 2018-2019)

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### **GENERAL**

1. This document sets out the admission arrangements for Kelsall Primary School, Mill View Primary School or Boughton Heath Academy (hereafter referred to as 'the Academy').
2. The Academy will comply with all relevant provisions of the Department for Education's School Admissions Code of Practice 2014 ("the Admissions Code"), the School Admission Appeals Code of Practice 2012 ("the Appeals Code") and the law on admissions. Reference in the Codes to admission authorities shall be deemed to be references to the Board of Cheshire Academies Trust, the powers and functions of which, may be delegated to the Local Governing Body (LGB) of the Academy.
3. All academies in Cheshire Academies Trust will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements administered by the Local Authority (LA) in the relevant geographical location and in respect of other arrangements specified in the Admissions Code.
4. Notwithstanding these arrangements, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to admit a named pupil to the Academy on application from a LA. Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult the Academy/Cheshire Academies Trust.

### **NB:**

- A. The Academy is one of a number within a multi Academy Trust controlled by Cheshire Academies Trust (CAT)
- B. CAT is the Trust and through its Board may delegate some or all functions to LGBs, set up to provide a local oversight of individual academies.
- C. The CAT Board is responsible for the admissions policy of each Academy. From time to time some admissions functions may be delegated to academies whilst others are carried out at Trust level under the direction of the Board.
- D. In the event of a query, enquiries should be made directly to the Academy

### **ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE**

The normal admissions round

5. The admission arrangements for the Academy for the academic year 2017/18 and for subsequent years are set out below.
6. The Academy may set a higher or lower admission number than its Published Admission Number (PAN) for any specific year. Before making any change to the agreed admission number, or a

permanent change to its PAN the Academy will in accordance with the provisions of the School Admissions Code 2014 notify the LA of such an arrangement.

7. Where it is proposed to have a lower admission number the Academy will consult as required by paragraphs 1.3 and 1.42 of the School Admissions Code.

In accordance with its funding agreement the Academy will also seek the consent of the Secretary of State to any permanent change to its PAN.

### **a) Nursery**

- i. If at any time in the future the Academy opens a nursery, the number of places available will be published in advance on the Academy website. The nursery will adopt the same admissions arrangements as the rest of the Academy, with the exception that no appeal will be allowed against the refusal of a place.
- ii. It is important to note that attendance/enrolment in the nursery will be distinct and separate and have no relevance to attendance in the primary or other sections of the Academy for which a separate application will have to be made in accordance with the LA's co-ordinated admissions arrangements. No appeal will be allowed against the refusal of a place in the nursery.
- iii. Oversubscription – If the nursery is oversubscribed, priority will be given to children with Statements of Special Educational Needs or Education and Health Care Plans where the Academy is named. The remaining places will then be offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria which applies to the Academy as a whole (as described in paragraph 12 below), except that sibling priority will only apply where a sibling already attends the Academy nursery or primary school.
- iv. Waiting list – The nursery will keep a waiting list which will be used to fill casual vacancies occurring as a result of an enrolled child leaving during the academic year or withdrawing from a place that has been offered. The list will be compiled in accordance with the Admissions Code so that children will be ranked in line with the Academy's oversubscription criteria (see paragraph 12 below).

### **b) Primary**

- i. The Academy has an agreed PAN of 30 pupils in the Reception year.

After the allocation of Reception places, the Academy will admit 'rising fives', i.e. all children with places can be admitted to the Reception year at school in the September following their fourth birthday but before reaching compulsory school age.

In accordance with paragraph 2.16 of the Admissions Code, a parent/carer may request that their child's taking up of a place be deferred until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made. A parent/carer may request that their child takes up the place part-time until compulsory school age is reached.

Note: In respect of a child born late in an academic year after 1 April, the ordinary expectation is that he or she will join Reception at the latest in the term he or she turns five and then progress to Year 1 in the next academic year. If a parent/carer wants their child to join Reception in the September term after their fifth birthday, that decision is strictly subject to the discretion of the Academy. The process for making an out-of-age-group application is described in paragraph 23.

- ii. Where the Academy is oversubscribed, the criteria for admission are as set out in paragraph 12 below.

## Consideration of applications

8. Arrangements for applications for places at the Academy will be made in accordance with the relevant LA's co-ordinated admission arrangements and will be made on the Common Application Form provided and administered by the relevant LA.
9. CAT will use the LA's timetable for applications to the Academy each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year). This will fit in with the timetable for the co-ordination of admission arrangements agreed following consultation, within the LA.
10. For Academy applications:
  - a) September – The Academy will publish in its prospectus information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for the following September (e.g. in September 2016 for admission in September 2017). This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective pupils and their parents/carers to visit the Academy.
  - b) September/October – The Academy will provide opportunities for parents/carers to visit the Academy.
  - c) January – Common Application Form to be completed and returned to the pupil's home LA to administer.
  - d) February – The LA sends the Academy applications to the Academy.
  - e) February – Determination of the next academic year's admissions policy. This will be published on the Academy's website and sent to the LA by 15 March for inclusion in the composite prospectus.
  - f) March – The Academy will advise the LA of applicants who meet required admissions criteria where it has been necessary to verify this for them, e.g. distance measurement.
  - g) March – The LA applies the agreed scheme for its own schools, informing other LAs of offers to be made to their residents.
  - h) April – Offers made to parents/carers.
11. After the admission of pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs or Education and Health Care Plans where the Academy is named, the Academy will consider all applications for places.

## PROCEDURES WHERE THE ACADEMY IS OVERSUBSCRIBED (Oversubscription Criteria)

12. Where the Academy is named on a pupil's Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education and Health Care Plan, that child will be admitted by the Academy. If the number of applications for admission to school is greater than the PAN, applications will be considered against the criteria and order set out below:
  - a) Looked After Children and children who have been previously looked after (pursuant to the Admissions Code)<sup>1</sup>.
  - b) Children of members of staff will have priority where the Academy is oversubscribed. A staff member, regardless of role, must have been employed to work at the Academy for two or more years, at the time the application for admission is made.

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<sup>1</sup>'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 a school." (footnote 16 of the School Admissions Code 2014). A previously looked after child "includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002."

- c) Children who at the time of the admission have a sibling who attends the Academy. For this purpose "sibling" means a whole, half or step-brother or - sister or an adopted child resident at the same address. In respect of applications to the Academy, the fact that an applicant has a sibling attending the nursery school will not be a factor giving rise to priority.
- d) Distance measurement – A child's home will be the address at which the child normally resides and which has been notified to the Academy and other relevant agencies as being the child's normal place of residence.
  - i. In those cases where the relevant LA measures distance on behalf of a CAT Academy, the method they adopt for measurement and also selection between equal applicants and those living in flats will apply.
  - ii. In those cases where a CAT Academy is required to carry out the measurement itself, priority will be given to those children who live closest to the school using a straight line measurement (as the crow flies) taken from Ordnance Survey Data from the Academy building's main reception to the main entrance of the child's home. Where a child resides in a block of flats, the distance will be measured from the Academy building's main reception to the main entrance of the building in which the flats are located.

Note: In the case of multiple births or brothers and sisters in the same year group, where there is only one place available in the Academy, both will be considered together as one application.

In the event that there are two families with equal applications and only available place then the academy will draw lots to determine which family is offered the place.

## **RIGHT OF APPEAL**

- 13. There will be a right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel for all applicants (with the exception of applicants to the nursery if/when one opens) refused admission (see paragraph 17 below).

## **OPERATION OF WAITING LISTS**

- 14. Subject to any provisions regarding waiting lists in the LA's co-ordinated admission scheme, the Academy will operate a waiting list. Where in any year the Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until the end of the summer term. Thereafter, parents/carers will be written to asking if they wish for their child to remain on the waiting list. This will be maintained by the Academy and it will be open to any parent/carer to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list following an unsuccessful application.
- 15. A child's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out in paragraph 12 above. When places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

## **ARRANGEMENTS FOR APPEAL PANELS**

- 16. Except in relation to an application for admission into the nursery school, where there will be no right of appeal following an unsuccessful application, parents/carers will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel ("Appeal Panel") if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of the Academy.
- 17. The Appeal Panel will be independent of the Academy. The arrangements for appeals will be in line with the Appeals Code. The determination of the Appeal Panel will be made in accordance with the Code and will be binding on all parties. The Academy will provide written guidance for parents/carers about how the appeals process works and will provide parents/carers with a named contact who can answer any queries parents/carers may have about the process.

**APPLICATIONS FOR ADMISSION TO THE ACADEMY OUTSIDE THE NORMAL ADMISSIONS ROUND – IN-YEAR APPLICATIONS**

- 18. In-year applications should be submitted to the Academy, unless other arrangements have been made and published on the Academy website.
- 19. Subject to any provisions in the LA’s published and agreed protocol on arrangements relating to applications submitted for years other than the normal year of entry, the Academy will consider all such applications and if the year group applied for has a place available, admit the child.
- 20. If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria in paragraph 12, shall apply.

**Appeals against refusal of an in-year application**

- 21. Except in relation to an application for admission into the nursery school, where there will be no right of appeal following an unsuccessful application, parents/carers will have a right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of the Academy.

**ADMISSION OF CHILDREN OUTSIDE OF THEIR NORMAL AGE GROUP**

- 22. Paragraph 2.16 of the School Admissions Code requires admission authorities to provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. However, there is flexibility for parents who do not feel their child is ready to start school before compulsory school age.

Children born in the summer term (between 1 April and 31 August) are not required to start school a full year after the point at which they could first have been admitted, the point at which other children in their age range are beginning year 1. Should the parent wish their child to be admitted to reception, rather than year 1, at this point, they may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group.

In general, children should be educated in their normal age group and they should only be educated out of their normal age group in very limited circumstances.

**Compulsory school age**

Children reach compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday.

<b>Child’s fifth birthday</b>	<b>Required to start school</b>
1 September – 31 December	Spring term following their fifth birthday
1 January – 31 March	Summer term following their fifth birthday
1 April – 31 August	Autumn term following their fifth birthday

**Making a decision in the child’s best interests**

Cheshire Academies Trust would advise that, in general, children should be educated in their normal age group, with the curriculum differentiated as appropriate. However, all cases will be dealt with on an individual basis, taking account of the child’s educational and social development.

Parents should note that, whilst evidence shows that, statistically speaking, summer born children tend to perform less well in school tests; this does not mean that all children born in the summer term will struggle at school. Teachers are skilled at differentiating the curriculum to meet a diverse range of needs. Before deciding to delay their child’s entry to school, the Trust would recommend that parents visit the academy they are thinking of applying to. The teachers will be able to explain the provision on offer for children in the reception class, how it is tailored to meet the needs of the youngest children and how the needs of these children will continue to be met as they move up

through the school. They may also be able to allay any concerns the parent may have about their child's readiness for school.

It is also important to note that all early years providers (including primary schools and early years settings) must adhere to the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, so all children that attend a primary school or an early years setting during the academic year following their fourth birthday will receive the Early Years Foundation Stage which is largely based around learning through play. Further information for parents about the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage is available on the Foundation Years website.

[http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2015/04/4Children\\_ParentsGuide\\_2015\\_FINAL\\_WEBv2.pdf](http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2015/04/4Children_ParentsGuide_2015_FINAL_WEBv2.pdf)

### **Where a parent wishes to defer or delay entry, there are four options:**

- **Part-time attendance** from the September following the child's fourth birthday, gradually increasing to full-time attendance by the time the child reaches statutory school age. Parent is required to apply for a school place within the timescale for the normal admissions round
- **Defer entry** – A place must be secured for the normal admissions round, however a written notification from the parent would be required to advise that the child would not be taking up the place until the following January or April, depending on the child's date of birth – the school place will be held open
- **Delayed entry option 1** – The parent can submit a written notification to the Trust and Local Authority advising that they wish to delay the child's entry until the following September (summer born children only) and join the normal age group in year 1. The parent would need to make an in year application to the school at the beginning of June prior to the September start
- **Delayed entry option 2** – The parent must apply within the timescale for the normal admissions round submitting a written request together with the application advising that they wish to delay the child's entry until the following September (summer born children only) and start in reception (a year below their normal age group). Approval from the admission authority (Cheshire West and Chester Council) is required for this option

The following issues around the options should be considered:

### **If the choice is made to defer entry until 2017:**

- He/she would only be able to access 15 hours of free Early Years Education instead of a full time place in a primary school
- Any secondary school he/she moves to will not be obliged to continue to educate him/her outside of his/her chronological year group (see transferring to secondary school)
- If he/she does remain out of his chronological year group in secondary school he/she would reach statutory school leaving age before he/she had completed his/her secondary education

### **Requesting admission outside of the normal age group**

Where a parent requests their child is admitted out of their normal age group, the school admission authority is responsible for making the decision on which year group a child should be admitted to. Admission authorities are required to make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

Parents are required to make an application within the timescale for their child's normal age group advising that they wish their child's entry to be delayed and admitted to reception the following year

Supporting information is required. This should demonstrate why it would be in the child's best interest to be admitted to reception rather than Year 1. In some cases parents may have professional evidence that would be appropriate to submit, for example a letter from a consultant where there is a medical reason

A panel of officers (which will include the Headteacher or Principal of the academy named as the parent's first preference) will consider the information provided and will determine whether to agree the delayed entry to reception

Once the decision is made a formal notification will be sent to the parent to advise the outcome prior to 16 April (primary national offer day) to enable the parent to make a decision on how to proceed

Late applicants requesting a delayed entry will also be considered as above, however they will not be notified of the outcome of their request prior to the primary national offer day.

If delayed entry to reception the following year is agreed:

The application for the normal age group will be withdrawn, the parent will be required to make a new application for the following year within the published timescale for admissions to reception and the child would remain eligible for the Early Years entitlement.

It should be noted that agreement to accept a child outside of their normal age group **DOES NOT** constitute the offer of a place. Whether or not the child is actually offered a place will depend upon the number of children applying for a place at the preferred school and the application of over-subscription criteria in the allocation of places in the normal admission round for the delayed year of entry.

If delayed entry to reception the following year is refused:

The parent may wish to re-consider delaying the child's entry and accept the place offered for the normal age group

The parent may wish to accept the place offered for the normal age group, however defer entry until later in the year (January or April), eligibility for the Early Years entitlement would remain

The parent may wish to continue to delay entry until the following September, the application for the normal age group will be withdrawn and an in year application will be required the following year to join the normal age group in Year 1, eligibility for the Early Years entitlement would remain.

### **Moving children to their normal age group**

Once a child has been admitted to a school it is for the Head of the school to decide how best to educate them. In some cases it may be appropriate for a child who has been admitted out of their normal age group to be moved to their normal age group, however in other cases it will not be appropriate. Any decision to move a child to a different age group should be based on sound educational reasons and made by the Head of School in consultation with the parents.

### **Transferring to secondary school**

Where a child has been educated out of their normal age group, the parent may again request admission out of the normal age group when they transfer to secondary school. It will be for the admission authority of that school to decide whether to admit the child out of the normal age group. They must make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the child's best interests, and will need to bear in mind the age group the child has been educated in up to that point.

### **School leaving age**

A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday of June in the school year they become 16. If a child is educated outside their normal age group the child will no longer be of compulsory school age during the school year in which most children take their GCSE examinations and cannot, therefore, be obliged to attend.

### **Parental appeals and complaints**

Parents do not have the right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like. However, they may make a complaint about the Trust's decision not to admit their child outside their normal age group.

Cheshire Academies Trust have a complaints procedure in place which can be viewed on the Trust's website at [www.cheshireacademiestrust.co.uk](http://www.cheshireacademiestrust.co.uk)

## **PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Consultation**

23. The Trust shall consult every seven years on its proposed admission arrangements unless these are the subject of change in any year.
24. Where consultation is required the Trust will consult for a period of six weeks between October and the following January. All relevant bodies listed in paragraph 1.44, Section 1 of the Admissions Code will be consulted and the consultation will be conducted directly with the relevant LA and applicable church authorities and by way of publication on the academies websites

### **Determination and publication of admission arrangements**

25. Following consultation, the Trust will consider comments made by those consulted. The Trust will then determine its admission arrangements by 28 February of the relevant year and notify those consulted of what has been determined.

### **Publication of admission arrangements**

26. Cheshire Academies Trust will publish its admission arrangements each year once these have been determined, by sending copies to the relevant LA and bodies named in paragraph 25 and publishing on the academies websites.
27. The published arrangements will set out:
  - a) The name and address of the Academy and contact details;
  - b) A summary of the admissions policy, including oversubscription criteria;
  - c) Numbers of places and applications for those places in the previous year; and
  - d) Arrangements for hearing appeals.

### **Representations about admission arrangements**

28. Where any bodies that were consulted, or that should have been consulted, make representations to the Trust about its admission arrangements, the Trust will consider the representations before determining the admission arrangements.
29. Where Cheshire Academies Trust has determined its admission arrangements and notified all those bodies whom it has consulted and any of those bodies object to the admission arrangements, they can make representations to the Schools Adjudicator. Objections must be referred to the Adjudicator by 15 May in the admissions determination year. Information on how to make an objection can be obtained from the office of the Schools Adjudicator:  
<http://www.schoolsadjudicator.gov.uk>

30. Those bodies referred to in paragraph 25 above have the right to ask the Academy to increase its proposed PAN for any year. Where such a request is made, but agreement cannot be reached locally, they may ask the Secretary of State to direct the Academy to increase its proposed PAN. The Secretary of State will consult the Trust and will then determine the PAN.
31. The Secretary of State may direct changes to the Trust's proposed admission arrangements and, in addition to the provisions above, the Secretary of State may direct changes to the proposed PAN. The Secretary of State will consult the Academy and/or the Cheshire Academies Trust before making any direction.
32. Pursuant to the Admissions Code 2014 the Academy may decide to admit above its PAN in year. It may also increase its stated PAN for any determination year and future years provided that the necessary approvals at board level and that of the Secretary of State are received. In these cases it is not necessary to consult but the Admissions Code provides for the LA to be given notice to enable them to deliver their co-ordinated responsibilities effectively.

### **Proposed changes to admission arrangements by the Academy after arrangements have been published**

33. Once the admission arrangements have been determined for a particular year and published, the Academy will propose changes only if there is a major change of circumstances. In such cases, the Academy must notify the bodies referred in paragraph 25 above of the proposed variation and must then apply to the Secretary of State setting out:
  - a) the proposed changes;
  - b) reasons for wishing to make such changes;
  - c) any comments or objections from those entitled to object.

### **The need to secure the Secretary of State's approval for changes to admission arrangements**

34. Following the consultation process outlined in this policy, the Academy will, through CAT, consult as may be required and/or necessary and seek the consent of the Secretary of State to any changes in its admission arrangements.
35. Records of applications and admissions shall be kept by the Academy for a minimum period of ten years and shall be open for inspection by the Secretary of State.

This policy was approved by the CAT Board of Trustees at their meeting on 2 December 2015. It will be reviewed in the Autumn Term 2018

Signed 

Chair of Trustees