

EXCALIBUR PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY For Admissions from September 2023

The Admissions Policy in respect of Excalibur Primary School has been discussed and adopted by the Governing Body

Chair of Governors

Gill Burgess

Head Teacher:

Juliet Jones

Agreed and ratified by the Full Governing Body on: 17th January 2022

To be reviewed February 2023

Statement of Intent

At Excalibur Primary School, we welcome all pupils, and places at the school are offered on an open, fair, clear and objective manner. We work to the principle that any parent accessing our admission arrangements will be able to understand easily how places for our school will be allocated, and will not be alienated or discouraged from applying based on the admission criteria.

Admissions Policy

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at the school
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

The school's admission authority is Chancery Multi Academy Trust.

Our admissions process is delivered in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- DfE (2021) 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE (2021) 'School Admission Appeals Code'

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school and Chancery Multi Academy Trust policies:

- Single Equality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy
- SEN Information Report

3. Determining PAN

The trust board will determine PANs for each school within the trust that educates a relevant age group. The trust's PAN for Excalibur Primary School is 30.

The trust board will publish its PAN annually. The trust board will notify the LA of any increases to the agreed PAN, and will reference the changes on the school's website. The trust board will consult on any proposal to decrease the school's PAN.

If the trust board decides that it can accept more pupils than laid out in its PAN, it will notify the LA in good time so that the LA can deliver its coordination responsibilities effectively.

In line with statutory requirements the trust board will not refuse admission to any age group, other than the relevant age groups, on the grounds that the number of children admitted has already

reached PAN; however, the trust board may refuse admission on the grounds that the admission of another child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources.

4. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

Looked after children are children who, at the time of making the application to a school are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangement order, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order

This includes children who appear, to the admission authority, to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

5. Admissions procedure

The school will offer parent and child walkarounds by appointment, with a member of the school's senior leadership team, to all potential applicants, irrespective of any protected characteristics. Where necessary, the school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants and disabled parents.

Parents are provided with a common application form (CAF) by the Local Authority where they will note their three preferred schools, along with a brief explanation, in rank order – the schools do not have to be located in the Local Authority area where the parents live. Parents will provide the Local Authority with the following information within the CAF:

- Their name and their child's name and date of birth
- Their and their child's address and proof of residency

The CAF should be submitted/returned to the parent's Local Authority by the date stipulated on their website. Late applications are considered after 'on-time' applications. Parents are not guaranteed to have their preferences met.

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

Once a place has been offered, the trust board may ask for the child's short birth certificate as proof of the birth date.

For previously LAC (PLAC) and LAC, the trust board will request a copy of the adoption order, child arrangements order or special guardianship order, and a letter from the Local Authority confirming that the child was looked after immediately prior to the order being made.

6. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group. This must be put in writing to the headteacher.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interest of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admission Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of medical professionals
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- The headteacher's views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admission round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6.

Applications will not be treated as lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have the right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

Pupils not of usual school age will not be given less of a priority where the school is oversubscribed.

7. Allocation of places

7.1 Admission number

The school has an agreed admissions number of 30 pupils for entry into the reception class.

7.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education health and care (EHC) plans name the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order until all places are filled.

1. Highest priority will be given to looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those 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, who apply for a place at the school.
2. Priority will next be given to children on the basis of social or medical need which. Supporting evidence from a registered professional, such as a medical practitioner, psychologist or social

worker, must be provided which sets out the particular reasons why this school is the most suitable school and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. The school will consider the information presented and will determine whether the evidence is sufficiently compelling to apply this criterion to the application. The school, if it is considered appropriate, will seek the views of the School Doctor or Educational Psychologist in the event of parents requesting admission on medical or psychological grounds. This criterion cannot be considered if the required documents have not been received. Few applications fall within this category.

3. Priority will next be given to children with siblings at the school. Siblings include step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address. The siblings should be already attending this school (in years Reception through to Year 5) and expected to continue at the school in the following school year. (i.e. at the time of admission).
4. Priority will next be given to children resident within the designate catchment zone of the school. Children will be classed within this category if they and their parents/carers are resident within the area served by the school on the closing date for applications.
5. Priority will then be given to the children who live closest to the school. Distance will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the school's front gates on Ivy Lane using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG). The school would class the child's home address as where the child wakes up most Monday to Fridays.

Where the school cannot accommodate all pupils qualifying under one of the criteria stated above, the next criteria will also be applied to determine priority for admission. For example, if the school cannot accommodate all siblings for whom an application has been received, all sibling applicants will be prioritised in the order of:

- i. Siblings (criterion 3) who live within the school's designated catchment area (criterion 4).
- ii. Siblings (criterion 3) who do not live within the school's designated catchment area (criterion 5).

All applicants within each criterion will be put into a distance order with priority being given to those that live nearest to the school, as stated in criterion 5 above. Council Tax records will be used for verification of addresses, where required.

7.3 Multiple births and Notes to the admission criteria

In relation to children of multiple births, exceptionally it may be necessary to offer places over the published admission number to ensure that, as far as possible, siblings (i.e. twins, triplets or children from other multiple births) can attend the same school.

7.4 Tie Break

Where it is identified that there are a limited number of places available and they be cannot differentiate between the applications using the nearest school criterion (criterion 5) a fair, clear, effective and random allocation tie-breaker will be applied. This may be required for example, where applicants reside in the same block of flats or are children of a multiple birth living at the same address. The system will be independently verified.

7.5 Equal Opportunities

The trust board will not establish admissions criteria that excludes individuals with a particular protected characteristic. The admissions criteria will not exclude a greater proportion of pupils with particular protected characteristics, unless the trust board can justify how this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

The admissions criteria will not discriminate against disabled applicants, unless the trust board can justify how this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

8. In-year admissions

Parents can apply for a place for your child at any time outside the normal admission round. As is the case in the normal admission round, all children whose EHC plans names the school will be admitted.

Likewise, if there are places available in the year group you are applying for, your child will always be offered a place.

If there are no places available at the time of your application, your child will not be offered a place.

If we do not offer a child a place at this school, this will be because to do so would prejudice the education of other children by allowing the number of children in the school to increase too much.

All in year applications must be made on a form that can be obtained from the local authority's website (either online or paper version), and should be submitted/returned to the Local Authority. The Local Authority will notify the school of all applications and the school will notify parents and carers and the Local Authority of the decision as soon as the application has been processed and within the timeframe stipulated.

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their in-year application in writing within 15 school days.

9. Fair Access Protocol

Excalibur School is part of the Fair Access Protocol agreed with Cheshire East Local Authority to ensure that the needs of all pupils, both existing and potential, continue to be met in suitable provision. The Fair Access Protocol is designed to ensure that unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. The agreed protocol ensures that no school (including those with available places) is asked to take a disproportionate number of children who have been excluded from other schools, or who have challenging behaviour. The protocol includes how the local authority will use provision to ensure that the needs of pupils who are not ready for mainstream schooling are met.

10. Sizes of classes for infants

Infant classes are those in which the majority of children turn 5, 6 or 7 during the course of the school year ie; Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes. We teach infant children in classes that have a maximum number of 30 children in line with The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012 which limits the size of an infant class during an ordinary teaching session to 30 pupils per school teacher.

Infant class size legislation makes allowance for the entry of an additional child in very limited circumstances where it would be prejudicial to his or her interests not to admit them ('excepted pupils').

11. Late Applications

Late applications for places will be considered after all applications received on time, unless there are very exceptional reasons for a late application which must be explained at the time of application.

12. Repeat Applications:

If the initial application to the school in the academic year is refused and/or an appeal declined, then there cannot be a repeat applications unless there are significant changes in the circumstances of the applicant or the school.

13. Waiting lists:

For entry into the reception year, waiting lists are held until the end of the Autumn term (31st December), in criteria order, by the Cheshire East Local Authority.

Waiting lists for 'in year' are not held by the school.

14. Admission appeals

If your child's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals. If you wish to appeal, you must obtain an appeal form from the school by emailing admin@excalibur.heshire.sch.uk or contact 01270 685136.

In the form you set out the grounds for appeal in writing and email it back to admin@excalibur.cheshire.sch.uk or post to Excalibur Primary School, Ivy Lane , Alsager, Cheshire, ST7 2RQ.

You can find details of the school's appeal timetable on the following webpage: <http://www.excalibur.cheshire.sch.uk/page/admissions/6329>.

15. Consultation, determination and publication

The trust board will consult on any proposed changes to the admission arrangements. Consultation will last for a minimum of six weeks and will take place between 1 October and 31 January in the determination year. The trust board will consult on admission arrangements at least once every seven years, even if no changes have been made in that time.

The trust board will consult with the following:

- Parents of children between ages two and 18
- Stakeholders
- Other admission authorities within the relevant area
- The Local Authority
- Any Local Authorities in which pupils have historically come from

The trust board will publish a copy of the proposed admissions arrangements and the contact details of the individuals responsible for admission liaison on the school website. A copy of the proposed admission arrangements will be made available upon request.

Any objections to the admission arrangements will be directed to the School Adjudicator by 15 May in the determination year.

The trust board will not revise the admissions arrangements for the school year once they have been determined, unless this would be necessary to give effect to a mandatory requirement, a determination of the Schools Adjudicator, or any misprint in the admission arrangements.

Admission arrangements will be determined by 28th February in the determination year on an annual basis, even when no changes to the to the arrangements have been made.

16. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Local Governing Board every year.

Whenever changes to the admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the governing board will publicly consult on these changes.