

MARLFIELDS PRIMARY ACADEMY

Admissions Policy for Academic Year 2025-2026

Policy Author	Mrs S Isherwood
Responsible Governor's Committee	Resources
Date discussed at SLT Meeting	
Date discussed at Staff Consultation meeting	
Date reviewed and approved by Committee	27 th March 2024
Full Governors Meeting	27 th March 2024
Chair of Governors Signature	
Frequency of Review	Review in the light of changes to legislation or operating experiences Or within one year of approved date from Governors
Review Month	December or as necessary
School Website	Yes

Admissions Policy for Academic Year 2025-2026

Introduction

Marlfields Primary Academy is a primary academy located in the local authority area of Cheshire East. The Trust Board determines the admission arrangements each year. The Admissions Policy has been designed to comply with the Schools Admissions Code 2021 and all relevant legislation including the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, including that on infant class sizes and equal opportunities. The academy will also observe the timetable and procedures for admission as set out in this code and the School Admission Regulations 2012.

Definition of a 'Parent'

In this policy and in education law, the definition of a 'parent' includes a natural or adoptive parent of the child (regardless of whether the child lives with them, has contact with them, or they have parental responsibility for the child). It also includes a person who is not a natural or adoptive parent of the child, but who has the care and /or parental responsibility for the child.

Inclusivity and Equality

The academy is fully inclusive and welcome applications for the admission of children with special educational needs (SEN), physical, mental, or behavioural disabilities and other protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010. The academy's admission arrangements are determined and implemented with its equality duties in mind, including the public sector equality duty (PSED). No child will be admitted over the PAN of 30 unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC plan)

Children with an EHC plan are admitted to school under separate statutory procedures which are managed by the child's home Local Authority, not under the school's determined admission arrangements. Parents of children with an EHC plan should therefore liaise with their child's home Local Authority's SEN team if they want them to propose to name the School in their child's EHC plan and consult with the School as to the suitability of the proposed placement.

Where, after consultation, the child's home Local Authority names the School in the child's EHC plan, the child must be admitted. Where this happens in the normal admission round (i.e. entry to Reception Year in September), these children will be allocated their places before all other applicants, which will reduce the number of places

left within the published admission number (PAN). At other times, the child will be admitted whether or not the PAN will be exceeded.

Application Procedure for Admissions to Reception Year

Applications for admission to Reception Year in September are known as applications made 'in the normal admission round'. Applications in the normal admission round must be made directly to the child's home Local Authority by completing and submitting a Common Application Form (CAF), which is available to download/complete online via the child's home Local Authority's website, by the application deadline.

Parents must state a preference for the academy in the CAF. Parents should carefully consider the oversubscription criteria stated above to determine whether other documentation must be submitted in support of the application. This documentation must be submitted to the child's home Local Authority by the application deadline. If not, the child will be placed in the next oversubscription category that applies.

The application deadline for admission to Reception year in the normal admission round is 15th January 2025.

National Offer Day for admission to Reception Year in the normal admission round is 16th April 2025.

Applications received after an application deadline will be treated as late applications, which means they will be processed after all on-time applications have been processed and places allocated thereby reducing the chances of the child being offered a place.

Application Procedure for 'In-Year Admissions'

Applications for admission to Reception Year other than in September, and to Years 1 to 6 at any time, are known as applications made 'outside the normal admission round' or 'in-year admission'. Applications for in-year admission must be made directly to the Local Authority by completing and submitting an In-Year Application via the Cheshire East Admissions Teams, which is available to download/complete online via Local Authority's website. Parents should carefully consider the oversubscription criteria stated above to determine whether other documentation must be submitted in support of the application. This documentation must be submitted at the same time as the application, or the child will be placed in the next oversubscription category that applies.

Oversubscription Criteria for all types of admissions.

Where there are more applications than places available, the order in which places will be allocated will be as follows:

- 'Looked after children', previously looked after children, adopted from care, special guardianship.

A 'looked after child' is a child who is in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by that local authority (as defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making the application to school. Children previously 'looked after' are children who were looked after as defined above, but immediately after being 'looked after' became subject to an adoption, child arrangement, or special guardianship order. An adoption order is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children act 2002. A 'child arrangements order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 8 of the Children Act 1989. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

- **Siblings**

Pupils with brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or stepsisters, foster brother or sisters, half-brother or half-sisters, adopted brothers or adopted sisters living together as part of one household, already attending the preferred school (in years Reception through to Year 6) and expected to continue at the school in the following school year (i.e. at the time of admission). 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.

- **Children of staff**

Staff with more than two years' service or those new members of staff recruited to meet a particular skills shortage.

- **All other children**

This category will include all children who do not fall into any of the oversubscription categories above.

Where there are more applications than places remaining in any of the oversubscription categories, the order in which places will be allocated will be determined by the distance between the child's home address (as defined by this policy) and the academy, with those living nearest receiving highest priority. Distance will be measured using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) which measures in a straight line from the academy's coordinate point to the coordinate point for the child's home address in miles. Parents should note that, while distance measuring software available online may give them rough idea as to the distance involved, it will not be as accurate as the dedicated software used by Cheshire West and Chester Council.

Where the child lives in a multi-dwelling building (for example, an apartment block), distance will be measured from same point in the building so that the distance will be the same for all children living there. Where two or more children live an equal distance from the academy (including where they live in the same multi-dwelling building), the order in

which places are allocated will be determined by random allocation supervised by someone who is independent of the academy.

The child's home address is the residential (not business) address of their parent (as defined in this policy) at which they live and sleep for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday night during term time. It will usually be the address at which they are registered with their GP, hospital, dentist and/or optician, and/or where Child Benefit/Child Tax Credit (if eligible) is claimed, at the time of application.

Where any uncertainty arises in respect of the child's home address, the academy reserves the right to seek documentary evidence to determine which address meets the definition stated above. For the avoidance of doubt, it is the address which meets this definition that will be used to process the application, which may not be the address given by the parent. Where the child/child's family is/are not living in the area of the academy at the time the application is submitted, the application will be accepted and processed using the child's new address where it is supported by supporting evidence (for example, a signed tenancy agreement, formal mortgage offer, HMLR title deed/document, NHS/GP registration card/letter, etc.).

Applications for the admission of children of UK Armed Forces personnel with a confirmed posting to the area, or Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area, will be accepted and processed where it is supported by an official letter giving a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address for use in applying the oversubscription criteria.

Statutory Maximum Infant Class Sizes

The statutory maximum infant class size for Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2 is 30 pupils per teacher. However, certain categories of children may still be admitted where this would result in a class size exceeding the statutory maximum. These categories are set out in regulations and summarised at Paragraph 2.15 of the Code. Where this happens, the additional pupils are 'excepted pupils' who do not count towards the class size until it falls back to 30, when they will no longer be regarded as 'excepted pupils'.

An Admissions Panel that consists of 3 Governors and 1 Independent person not employed by Marlfields Primary Academy will apply the oversubscription criteria.

Statutory Right of Appeal

Parents have a statutory right of appeal against the refusal of a place at the academy. This right applies to a refusal of a place in any year group at any time. The way in which admission appeals are dealt with is set out in the School Admission Appeals Code 2012 (Appeals Code). The process is different for appeals against the refusal of a place in a year group to which the statutory maximum class size applies (Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2) compared to

appeals against a refusal of a place in other year groups. Parents should refer to the Appeals Code for further information in this respect.

Full details of the statutory right of appeal will be set out in the formal letter notifying parents of the refusal of a place, including the deadline for lodging an appeal. The academy will also publish an appeals timetable for appeals against the refusal of a place in the normal admission round (i.e., to Reception Year in September) alongside this policy on or before 28 February in the year in which offers are made.

Deferred Entry and Part-Time Attendance in Reception Year

All children are entitled to a full-time place in Reception Year in the September following their fourth birthday. Children do not, however, reach compulsory school age (CSA) until one of three prescribed dates following their fifth birthday as follows:

<u>Born on or between:</u>	<u>Prescribed date the child reaches CSA:</u>
1 September and 31 December	31 December
1 January and 31 March	31 March
1 April and 31 August <small>(known as 'summer'born children)</small>	31 August (one school year later)

Parents have an absolute right to decide that their child will not start school until they reach CSA, which is known as 'deferred entry' (or 'delayed entry' in the case of 'summer born children' - see below). The academy has no discretion to refuse to allow this.

Where parents choose to defer entry until later in the school year, the academy will hold their place in Reception Year for them, rather than giving it to another child, for a maximum of two terms (i.e., until the Easter end of term holiday). Places cannot be deferred or retained beyond this point.

Parents also have an absolute right to decide that their child will attend school part-time until they reach CSA. In this case, the right can be exercised throughout the school year (i.e., all three terms), and it can also be combined with the right to defer. For example, a child born on 5 February could defer starting school until the first day of term after the Christmas and New Year break, and then attend part-time until the Easter break.

Where parents want to defer their child's entry and/or choose for them to attend school part-time, they should apply for a place in the normal way and, once

they have accepted the offer of a place, notify the academy of their decision, preferably in writing. There is no need to give reasons.

Delayed Entry for summer Born Children

Children born between 1 April and 31 August (known as 'summer born children') do not reach CSA until 31 August and are therefore not legally required to start school until one school year after they became entitled to a full-time place in Reception Year. Parents of summer born children can defer their child's place for one or two terms and/or choose for their child to attend part-time throughout that school year, as set out above. However, they cannot defer their child's place for a whole school year and still retain it. If they do not want their child to start school at all until the following year (i.e., delay their entry), they will need to refuse the offer of a place and apply for admission again the next year. However, where a summer born child is admitted one school year later than usual, by default this would be to Year 1 with their normal age group. This means a) they will have missed Reception Year entirely, and b) they will only achieve an offer of a place if there is one available in Year 1 at that time, which is uncommon.

Parents can, however, make a request for their child to be admitted one year later than usual, outside their normal age group, to Reception Year. The procedure for making these requests is set out further below, however parents should note that, unlike with deferred/delayed entry and part-time attendance, they do not have an absolute right to decide that their child will be admitted outside their normal age group - this is at the discretion of the Admission Authority for the school involved. Parents are strongly encouraged to make their requests in a timely manner, ideally well ahead of any application deadlines, so that they can obtain a decision in principle which will enable them to make informed decisions on school preferences when they subsequently apply for admission.

Requests for Admission Outside Normal Age Group

Parents have a right to request that their child is admitted to a year group other than their normal year group at a school. This may be to a year group below or above, and there may be any number of reasons for making this request. However, parents do not have a right to decide that their child will be admitted outside their normal age group. Such requests must be considered by the Admission Authority of the school concerned (in this case the School's Admission Committee) in order for it to decide whether or not to agree the request in principle, or refuse the request, taking into account the factors set out below.

Requests for admission outside normal age group are not applications for admission, which must still be made in the usual way. Parents are strongly encouraged to make their requests in a timely manner, ideally well ahead of any application deadlines, so that they can obtain a decision in principle which will enable them to make informed decisions on school preferences when they subsequently apply for admission. A separate request must be made to the Admission Authority for each school being considered.

The Admission Committee will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the parents' views, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, the child's medical history and the views of their medical professionals, whether they have previously been educated or attended nursery 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. They will also consider the views of the Headteacher of the School and, where provided, the Headteacher of any current or previous school. This is not an exhaustive list, and parents may put forward any matters for the committee to consider.

Parents should make their requests by completing the online admissions for via the Cheshire East website as well as completing the Academy's Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group Form and submitting it with any supporting documents to the academy marked for the attention of the admission officer.

This form is available to download on the academy's website or in hard copy from the academy's main office. In all cases, the Admission Committee will notify parents of the outcome of their request formally in writing, explaining its reasons in sufficient detail for parents to understand why it came to that decision.

Where the request is agreed in principle, this letter should accompany the application for admission subsequently made for a place at the academy.

Parents do not have a statutory right of appeal against a refusal of a request for admission outside normal age group, but they may submit a complaint under the academy's published Complaints Policy if they do not believe the request was dealt with properly.

[Review and determination of the Academy's admission arrangements](#)

The term 'admission arrangements' means "The overall procedure, practices and oversubscription criteria used in deciding the allocation of school places including any device or means used to determine whether a school place is to be offered". The admission arrangements therefore include not only this policy, but all other admission related documents and any other published information about the academy's admission processes. Under the Code, the Admission Authority for a school must formally determine the admission arrangements for the next intake

at that school every year on or before 28 February. Where no changes (other than changing dates/deadlines) are proposed, there is no need to consult. Where changes are proposed (other than a proposed increase in PAN), the Admission Authority must carry out a 6 week statutory consultation in accordance with the Code between 1 October and 31 January ahead of determination of the admission arrangements. Where no changes have been proposed in the intervening period, the Admission Authority must consult on the admission arrangements every 7 years.

Once determined on or before 28 February, the academy's admission arrangements for that intake must be published and a copy provided to their Local Authority. Determined admission arrangements cannot be varied except in limited circumstances to correct a mistake or give effect to a decision of a Schools Adjudicator. All other variations will require Secretary of State consent, which will only be granted where there has been a 'major change in circumstances'. The admission arrangements for the September 2025 intake were determined by the Trust Board at their meeting on Tuesday 10th October 2023.

Appendix. 1. - Appeal Hearings Timetable

[Appeals for a Reception Place Normal Admissions Round.](#)

Parents have 20 school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to prepare and lodge their written appeal. Appeals will be heard within 40 school days of the parent lodging an appeal. For late applications, (please see footnote below) appeals should be heard within 40 school days from the deadline for lodging appeals where possible, or within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged. The school will give 12 school days' notice of their appeal hearing date. The parents and admission authority must submit additional evidence to the clerk at least 7 days before the hearing date; therefore, allowing time for the clerk to send appeal papers to the panel and parties. A decision letter will be sent within 5 school days of the hearing wherever possible. Marlfields Primary Academy does hold a waiting list for Reception until the end of the Autumn term and parents are asked to keep in touch to find out if a place has become available.

[Appeals for In-Year Admissions](#)

Parents have 20 school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to prepare and lodge their written appeal. Appeals will be heard within 30

school days of the parent lodging an appeal. The school will give **12** school days' notice of their appeal hearing date. The parents and admission authority must submit additional evidence to the clerk at least **7** days before the hearing date; therefore, allowing time for the clerk to send appeal papers to the panel and parties. A decision letter will be sent within **5** school days of the hearing wherever possible. Appeals submitted after the appropriate deadlines noted above will be heard in accordance with the time scale above for both normal admission rounds and in-year admissions. An application is a 'late' application if it is for the admission of a child to a relevant age group; it is submitted before the first day of the school term of the admission year; and a determination relating to the application is not made by an authority on or before the offer date. The 'relevant age group' is the age group at which pupils are or will normally be admitted to the school e.g. reception or year 6 (Section 142 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998).

Further information can be found on the Cheshire East website
[School Admissions](#)