

September
2023



Admissions Policy 2023-2024

Inspire to Aspire

Responsibility:- Directors Board

Agreed on:- January 2022

Signed:- _____

To be reviewed: Annually

(This Policy applies to all schools within MET)



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1. Purpose of the Policy

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to make the admissions process to schools within Mercian Educational Trust (the Trust) clear and open.

1.2 The Trustees have agreed that the admission arrangements for all its schools will remain in line with the agreed arrangements for Worcestershire’s maintained non-denominational secondary and primary schools. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the general terms contained in the Worcestershire Admission to Primary and Secondary School Booklets.

1.3 The Trust adheres to the statutory requirements and the principles expressed in the School Admissions Code 2021. This includes reference to the Worcestershire Fair Access Protocol. The admission arrangements must be confirmed by 28 February each year and published on the schools’ websites by 15 March.

1.4 Reception admissions: The Trustees and Governors are supported by the Worcestershire Local Authority (LA) in processing applications for places and informing families. MET is the admission authority. Schools are responsible for allocation of places using the criteria set out in this policy

1.5 Planned Admission Numbers (PANs):

School	PAN	Notes
Dines Green Community Academy	30	
Great Malvern Primary School	48	
Northleigh CE Primary School	30	PAN adjusted 2022
Somers Park Primary School	88	Consisting of 58 – Somers Park Site 30 – Malvern Vale Site



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1.6 Infant Class Sizes: 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.

1.7 Additional children may only be admitted under the limited exceptional circumstances listed in the Admissions Code 2014.

1.8 The Trust commissions independent appeals panel which hears appeals from unsuccessful applicants for a place in any year group.

2. The Admission Criteria and Arrangements

2.1 Admission Criteria

Should any school be over-subscribed in Reception (i.e. there are more applications than places available), initial allocations will be made according to the criteria below. These are listed in order of priority and will be applied to all applications for the school received by the published closing date for applications.

- a. **Looked After and Previously Looked After children** (Please see Appendix 1 Note 1)
- b. **Siblings** - Pupils with the presence of a sibling at the chosen School when the child will be admitted. (Please see Appendix 1 Note 2)
- c. **Pupils who have a parent employed at the school.** (Please see Appendix 1 Note 3)
- d. **Geographical considerations** - Pupils who live closest to the chosen school in a direct line from the school (Please see Appendix 1 Note 4)
- e. **Tie Breaker** - Where it does not prove possible to resolve allocations to an over-subscribed school by the application of criteria a) to e), any remaining places will be allocated by drawing lots (Please see Appendix 1 Note 5)



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2.2 Children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

Children with EHCP's are placed in schools through the arrangements set out in the SEN Code of Practice and not through these admission criteria. Each governing body is required by Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 to admit to the school a child with a Plan that names the school whether or not there are places available. Any appeal concerning the Plan or the admission is to the independent First-tier Tribunal (Health, Education and Social Care Chamber).

2.3 Children of Multiple Births

Whenever possible, in managing the allocation of places to schools, the Trust will endeavour to place children of multiple births in the same school within the places available. Where the last child to qualify for a place is a twin or child of multiple birth, numbers will be breached to enable all children of the same birth to attend the same school.

2.4 Late applications

Late Applications **will** receive a lower priority. All late applications (with exception to Children of UK Service Personnel) will only be considered following those received on time.

Places will be allocated by the school admission officer using the criteria set out above.

2.5 Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces) & Crown Servants¹

¹Mercian Educational Trust recognises the particular needs of children of UK service personnel(UK Armed Forces) & Crown Servants.

Paragraph 2.21 of the School Admissions Code requires that:

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, admission authorities must:

- a) allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area (as long as one is available), provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. Admission authorities must not refuse to process an application and must not refuse a place solely because the family do not yet have an intended address, or do not yet live in the area.
- b) use the address at which the child will live when applying their oversubscription criteria, as long as the parents provide some evidence of their intended address. Admission authorities must use a Unit or quartering address as the child's home

¹ Officers employed by departments of the United Kingdom Government, such as FCO, DFID, UKVi, UKTi.



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address when

considering the application against their oversubscription criteria, where a parent requests this.

c) not reserve blocks of places for these children.

d) ensure that arrangements in their area support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children. Arrangements must be appropriate for the area and be described in the local authority's composite prospectus.

2.6 Home Address

The child's home address is defined as the only or main permanent residential address, at the closing date for applications, where the child usually resides and which is the usual address of the parent/carer with main responsibility for the child. MET will not accept an address of a business, relative, friend, childminder, a temporary address or an address of a house it is intended to move to. The only exceptions are for children of UK service personnel for whom special arrangements apply.

Worcestershire Council and the Trust reserve the right to seek documentary evidence to support a claim of residence.

Where parents/carers have shared responsibility, the child's home address will usually be considered to be that of the parent/carer with whom the child lives for the majority of the school week (eg three or more days out of five Monday to Friday during term time). Where care is split equally, the nearest address will be used for the application. Parents/carers must provide independent supporting documentary evidence to prove that care is equally split.

All evidence provided by parents/carers will also be considered in reaching a decision on the home address for admissions purposes.

If an application or the evidence is later proved to be fraudulent or misleading, the Trust reserves the right to withdraw the place up to the end of October.



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2.7 Definition of statutory school age for primary phase children

Legally, children do not have to be in full time education until the term following their fifth birthday: this is the compulsory school age.

Child's fifth birthday	Can defer until	If I defer which class will my child join
1 September 31 December	January	Reception class
1 January 31 March	April	Reception class
1 April 31 August	Please see section 2.9 below.	

However, children are normally admitted to school in the September following their fourth birthday.

2.8 Deferred entry to Reception

Where an applicant to Reception is below compulsory school age the parent(s) can request:

- a. that the date their child is admitted is deferred until later in the academic year or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age (see section 2.7 above), or
- b. that their child takes up the place part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

2.9 Delayed entry to Reception

Summer born children (children born from the beginning of April to the end of August) reach compulsory school age in the September following their fifth birthday. If a parent/carer wishes for their summer born child(ren) to start school in the reception year group in the September following their fifth birthday, the Trust will make a decision based on the circumstances of the individual case. Factors considered may include:

- in the case of children born prematurely, the fact that they may have naturally fallen into the lower age group if they had been born on their expected date of birth;
- whether delayed social, emotional, cognitive or physical development is adversely affecting their readiness for school;



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- whether they have previously been educated outside their normal age group. Children placed in a year group below their chronological age will have to start school full-time immediately, as they will be compulsory school age.

Where the Trust indicates willingness to accept an application from a child placed out of year group, this will not guarantee a place at the preferred school as any application will have to be made with the admissions round for the year in which the child is starting school and considered against the published admission criteria.

2.10 Appeals –

a. September intake.

After the closing date for applications (15th January for Reception) the LA will send each school lists of all their applicants. Each school will apply its admission criteria and allocate up to the PAN to each school. Parents will be informed of the allocation of places by the Local Authority, 16th April. If parents wish to appeal they need to contact the school directly to request this.

On receipt of an appeals request the school will request that the LA convenes an independent appeals panel at which both parents and the Trust will present their cases. Decisions made by the panel are legally binding.

b. In-Year applications

Appeals for In-Year admission should be made using the same process as September intake.

2.11 Waiting Lists

Where the school is oversubscribed and places have been refused to applicants, a waiting list will be maintained for any vacancies which subsequently arise. The waiting list will be referred to for all applications within the year and will be prioritised according to the admission criteria and not by reference to the date of joining the waiting list.

The list will be maintained by the school for the period of the academic year.

2.12 In-Year Transfer Years Reception to 6

Parents who wish to obtain a place at any of the schools other than at the September intake to Reception, should send applications to School Admissions who will liaise with schools and write to the parents with the outcome of their application.

Further information can be found at

https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20099/school_admissions/706/in-year_applications



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If the year group in the preferred school is full or oversubscribed and where further admissions would prejudice the efficient provision of education or use of resources, then the school will refuse the place.

The applicant will be given the opportunity to appeal and an appeals form will be supplied. The Trust will also notify the parents of any places available at another suitable Trust school. If the parents choose to appeal for a place at the preferred school an independent appeals panel will be convened by the LA at which both parents and the Trust will present their cases. Decisions made by the panel are legally binding.

3. Fair Access Protocol

MET schools work in cooperation with Worcestershire Fair Access Protocol.

For more information please access:

http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20632/school_admissions_policies_and_appeals

4. Consultation Process

This policy was developed through the Trust and LA's consultation processes.

5. Relationship to other policies

Parents and students are encouraged to visit the schools' websites and attend open days/evenings.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Headteachers will ensure that all parents/carers of students, or potential students, are fully aware of the Admissions Policy and publications.

Headteachers will ensure that a clear record of any decisions on applications, including in-year applications is kept and regularly shared with governors



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Appendix 1. Admission Criteria Notes:

1. **Looked After and Previously Looked After children;**
 - a. A **“looked after child”** has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child who is:
 - i. in the care of the local authority or
 - ii. being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (eg children with foster parents) at the time of making the application to the school.
 - b. **‘Previously Looked After’** is a child who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, child arrangement order or special guardianship order and includes those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Satisfactory evidence will be required to validate ‘Previously Looked After’ status.

2. **Siblings:** children are defined as siblings if:
 - a. the sibling is already in attendance at the preferred school and will be in attendance (statutory school age only) on the date at which the applicant transfers to that school
 - b. they are full or half brother or sister or
 - c. they are adoptive brother or sister or
 - d. they are children of the same household;
 - e. The sibling rule **does not** apply across the Trust, but is specific to each school.

3. **Children eligible service pupil premium** - Pupils attract SPP if they meet one of the following criteria:
 - a. one of their parents is serving in the regular armed forces (including pupils with a parent who is on full commitment as part of the full time reserve service)
 - b. they have been registered as a ‘service child’ on a school census since 2016, see footnote [footnote 1]
 - c. one of their parents died whilst serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme

4. **Any Employee of Mercian Educational Trust** - Where the member of staff wishes their child to be admitted to a MET school they must be:
 - a. An employee, directly employed by Mercian Educational Trust



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- b. Employed at the school where the admission is sought
 - c. Have been employed by the Trust for 2 or more years at the time the application is made, or
 - d. Be a member of staff recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

5. **Geographical considerations** - The Local Authority will make “direct line” measurements and advise the school of distances. The measurement will be taken using the GeoCode Points for each property and the GeoCode point for the main school site. The Local Authority uses a software package called Arcview GIS to determine distance. Ordnance Survey supplies the co-ordinates that are used to plot an address within this system.

6. **Tie breaker:** Lots will be drawn by someone who is independent of the admissions process and MET.



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Appendix 2.- Advice on applying for a place at a MET School

Parents seeking a place at the Academy are invited to:

- **Visit the school to learn and assess its ethos and learning environment .**
- Obtain an admissions pack – This will contain a prospectus, latest OFSTED report, and the Worcestershire Local Authority ‘Starting School’ leaflet.
- All applications for September Admissions in Worcestershire are made on-line to the local authority. The LA forward all applications to the school to allow the school to rank applications based on MET admissions policy.
- In year applications are made directly to the school.

Key Dates

- School Starters - Applications are accepted for pupils who will be **5 years old** between 01.09.2023 and 31.08.2024.
- Applications for Reception classes should be received by **15th January 2023**.

ALLOCATIONS

- Parents will be informed by the local authority on our behalf of placements on the date specified in the Worcestershire ‘Information for Parents’ handbook.
- Acceptance of places should be returned within two weeks of the offer.
- Appeals - In the event of an application for a place being not allocated, submissions to an independent appeal panel should be made within two weeks.
- All preferences at point of application are equal and will be ranked according to the admissions criteria.
- Should a parent wish to discuss deferred or delayed entry, they should arrange to meet the headteacher.
- A copy of the ‘In Year Fair Access’ protocol is available from the local authority.
- Parents should note that a place in the school nursery does not automatically ensure a place in the school Reception class.

Further Information

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions