



Admissions Policy and Arrangements for 2023-2024 for

Ash Grove Academy
Hollinhey Primary School
Holmes Chapel Primary School
Ivy Bank Primary School
Parkroyal Community School
Peover Superior Endowed Primary School
Puss Bank School & Nursery
Sandbach Primary Academy
The Wilmslow Academy
Underwood West Academy
Victoria Road Primary School
Wilbraham Primary School

Admissions Policy and Determined Arrangements for Academies of The Aspire Educational Trust.

Introduction

Academies are required by their funding agreements to comply with the regulations that are set out Section 88C of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012, the Statutory School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code.

The Schools Admissions Code has been updated with effect from September 2021 and this policy has been updated in July 2021 in line with the new Schools Admissions Code.

Our Board of Trustees and Local Academy Committees apply the regulations on admissions to ensure that all school places are allocated and offered in an open, fair and equal way to all those who wish to attend any Academy of the Aspire Educational Trust. We welcome all pupils, irrespective of faiths, cultures, races, disabilities or family backgrounds.

This policy document applies to all Academies of the Aspire Educational Trust

The table below sets out the admission authority and other responsible bodies applicable to our Trust.

Type of schools	Who is the admission authority?	Who deals with complaints about arrangements?	Who is responsible for arranging/providing for an appeal against refusal of a place at a school?
Academies	Aspire Educational Trust	Schools adjudicator	Aspire Educational Trust

Aims and objectives

- We seek to be an inclusive Multi Academy Trust, welcoming children from all backgrounds and of all needs and abilities.
- All applications will be treated on merit, and in a sensitive manner.
- It is our wish for parents and carers to find a place for their child at the school or academy of their choice. The only restriction we place on entry is that of number. The number of places available at each academy is determined by the capacity of the school and the published admissions number. All preferences made in accordance with the admission arrangements will be met except where this would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources, when the year group in question is full. If the number of

children applying for entry exceeds the places available, we adopt the Trusts published admission arrangements criteria to determine the order in which applicants can be offered places.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to the related statutory legislation, including but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2012
- Human Rights Act 1998
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012

This policy also has due regard to statutory and non-statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (September 2021) School Admissions Code
- DfE (2012) School Admissions Appeals Code
- DfE (July 2021) Admissions priority for children adopted from state care outside of England
- DfE (July 2021) Fair Access Protocols Guidance for school leaders, admission authorities and local authorities

The standard number & Published Admission Number (PAN)

The 'standard number' (capacity) is the number of children the LA considers an academy can accommodate. The Published Admission Number (PAN) is the number of children normally admitted in each annual admissions round. We keep these numbers under review, and the Board of Trustees may decide to increase the PAN without consultation if circumstances change.

The pupil admission numbers and capacity for our academies are:

	PAN	Academy Capacity
Ash Grove Academy	30	204
Hollinhey Primary School	30	210
Holmes Chapel Primary School	60	420
Ivy Bank Primary School	60	480
Parkroyal Community School	60	420
Peover Superior Endowed Primary School	15	105
Puss Bank School & Nursery	60	420
Sandbach Primary Academy	15	105
The Wilmslow Academy	60	420
Underwood West Academy	75	442
Victoria Road Primary School	30	203
Wilbraham Primary School	90	720

Infant Class Sizes Regulations

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')

Children below compulsory school age

Children reach compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday. Under the Trust's policy, children may start school in the Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. Applications for admission are normally considered in relation to the availability of places in the child's chronological age group, other than in exceptional circumstances.

Parents can request that the date their child starts school in the Reception class is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year. Applications for deferred admissions must be made by the published closing date. For parents and carers with children born between 1 April and 31 August they should contact the Academy Principal for advice if they wish to consider delaying their child's entry for a full year. Parents and carers considering this option must apply in the child's chronological year group to ensure that they are part of the process should they decide not to delay their child's entry. The vast majority of children in Aspire Educational Trust schools are taught in their chronological year group.

To help younger children adjust to school, academies may propose to phase full time admission over the first four weeks of term, admitting these children on a part time basis. However, it should be noted that parents have the right to insist that their child receives full time from the start of September and that they also can request that their child attends school on a part time basis until the child reaches compulsory school age.

The Trust must provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Until the child reaches compulsory school age, parents may request the child attends part-time. These arrangements should be discussed with the Principal of the relevant academy.

Children outside their normal age group

The Trust will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

The admissions process

Local Authorities (LA) must collate and publish all the admission arrangements in their area in a single prospectus.

Admission authorities must determine admission arrangements annually by 28th February for admissions in September 2 years hence, e.g Determination by 28th February 2021 for Admission in September 2022. If changes to the admission arrangements are proposed, the authority must consult with interested parties for a minimum of 6 weeks between 1st October and 31st January in the determination academic year. Consultation must also take place once every seven years even if no changes are proposed.

Determined arrangements can be objected to and referred to the schools adjudicator by 15 May in the determination year. Any decision made by the schools adjudicator must be acted on by the admission authority and arrangements amended accordingly.

All applications for places at an Aspire Educational Trust Academy must be made via the Local Authority Admissions Teams in the first instance. Contact details for our local authorities can be found in Appendix 1.

Parents of children in an attached nursery unit or a unit run by an Aspire academy will still have to apply for a place in Reception via the Local Authority.

Local Authorities websites provide relevant information for parents and carers on how to apply for a place at a school/academy of their choice for the normal annual admissions rounds in September and for admissions outside the normal rounds (in-year admissions/transfers).

Parents and carers have a right to express their preference, but this does not guarantee a place at a particular school or academy.

The Aspire Educational Trust is the Admissions Authority for all its academies and determines the admission arrangements and criteria. The admission arrangements are published on the Trust and the academies websites and notified to the Local Authorities.

Normal Annual Admissions Rounds (Admission to Reception)

- Children enter school at the start of the academic year in which they become five. There is one admission date per year, early in September (i.e. when the autumn term begins). Parents and carers who would like their child to be admitted to an Aspire Educational Trust Academy

during the year their child is five should ensure that they complete a Local Authority application by the date stipulated on the LA website.

Applications can be made usually between 1st September of the previous year and a date in January of the year of entry (for example, applications to start school in September 2018 had to be made between 1st September 2017 and 15th January 2018).

- All 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 by the date stipulated on the website. Late applications are considered after 'on-time' applications. Applications cannot be made direct to the academies.
- The Local Authority will notify the Academy of applications shortly after the closing date. A panel of the academy's Local Academy Committee will be responsible for ranking the applications in accordance with the admissions criteria below.

Admissions criteria

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies of schools to admit a child with a statement of special educational needs or education health and care plan that names their school. Once children with statements of special educational needs or Educational Health and Care Plans have been admitted then available places are allocated in accordance with the order of the following criteria:

- 1. '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.** Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. All references to previously looked after children in this policy mean such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and 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.
- 2. Siblings** – pupils with brothers or sisters, step-brothers or step-sisters, 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 5) and expected to continue at the school in the following school year at the time of admission. Under exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to offer places over the published admission number to ensure that, as far as possible, twins, triplets or children from other multiple births can attend the same school. Siblings in year six will not be considered under this criterion for the normal admission rounds.

3. **Children attending** a nursery/pre school which is based on the school site commencing the Autumn Term of the admission period preceding their year of entry to reception.
4. **Children of staff** - with more than two years' service or those new members of staff recruited to meet a particular skills shortage.
5. **Pupils living nearest to the school** – measured by the relevant Local Authority using their definition of measuring distances. Please see your Local Authority website for the definition. Examples below:

Cheshire East “Pupils living nearest to the school measured using the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) which measures straight line distances in miles from the school's coordinate point to the point of residence's coordinate point”

Cheshire West and Chester “Pupils living nearest to the school measured in a straight line from the centrally plotted Basic Land and Property Unit point of the child's home address to the centrally plotted Basic Land and Property Unit point of the school as defined by Local Land and Property Gazetteer.”

Manchester City Council “Pupils living nearest to the school measured in a straight line (not along roads or paths) from the child's home address to the centre of the school.”

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, the home address or place of residency will be determined according to the definition of the LA.

- If an academy is undersubscribed all applicants will be offered a place.

- Where an academy is oversubscribed and 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 an academy cannot accommodate all children with siblings the priority will be in the order of children with siblings living nearest to the academy.
- Where places are oversubscribed and the authority cannot differentiate between two or more applicants using the 'nearest' oversubscription criterion, a random allocation (such as application references drawn from a hat) will be used as a tie-break to decide who has highest priority for admission. This process will be independently verified and recorded. This may be required for example, where applicants reside in the same block of flats or separate addresses measuring the same distance from the academy.
- 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 academy.
- The Academy is responsible for notifying the Local Authority Admissions Teams of the ranked applications.
- The Local Authority is responsible for notifying parents and carers of places offered after all the applications have been ranked, and for notifying the Academies of places offered.

In Year Admissions/Transfers

- Applications for school places received after the 1st September into the relevant age group or at any time into any other year group are referred to as 'in year' admissions/transfers.
- 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 Academy of applications and the Academy will consider the application and notify the parents/carers and the Local Authority of the decision as soon as the application has been processed and within the timeframe stipulated by the Local Authority.
- Academies of the Aspire Educational Trust will be part of the Fair Access Protocol agreed with their 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.

Admission appeals

If we are unable to offer a child a place at one of our Academies, this will be where the admission of another child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources.

Normal Round Appeals (Reception)

Parents and carers have the right to appeal against a decision to refuse entry. They can do so by sending an appeals form to the Academy by the appeals deadline. Appeals forms can be obtained from the Academy offices. Dates for appeals deadlines can be found on the relevant Local Authority websites.

Appeals lodged after these dates (late applications for appeal) will be heard within 40 school days of the appeal deadline or 30 school days of being lodged, whichever is the later date.

In Year Appeals

Parents and carers have the right to appeal against a decision to refuse entry. Appeal applications must be lodged with the relevant Academy within 20 school days from the date of notification that the application for admission was unsuccessful. Appeals are normally heard within 30 school days from the date the completed appeal form is received by the Academy.

All appeals

The Aspire Educational Trust will arrange for an independent panel to hear all appeals. The appeal panel's decision is binding for all parties concerned.

Notification of the appeal hearing will be sent to appellants 10 school days in advance of the hearing. If an appellant wishes to provide additional evidence which was not included in their original application or appeal form this must be received 5 working days before the hearing

date. Otherwise the Panel is entitled to decide not to accept information or evidence submitted after that deadline.

(Further details of appeal arrangements are set out in the revised Code of Practice on School Admissions Appeals, which came into force in September 2004 and was updated February 2012).

Repeat Applications

Repeat applications and appeals will not be considered within the same school year, unless the parent, carer or school's circumstances have changed significantly since the original application was made. Full details of the change of circumstances must be provided for consideration by the local authority.

Vacancies occurring in a year group which was fully subscribed at the time of the initial application will be deemed to constitute a significant change in the school's circumstances and a repeat application will be permitted.

Waiting Lists

Waiting lists will be held by the relevant Local Authority for the normal admission round (September admissions into the Reception class) and only until the 31 December that year. Places becoming vacant during this time will be reallocated in oversubscription criteria order and not on a first come, first served basis i.e. a vacant place will be reallocated to the child with the highest oversubscription criteria on the school's waiting list on the day the place became available. Placing a child's name on a waiting list does not affect the statutory right of appeal.

Children with an Educational Health and Care Plan, Looked after children, previously looked after children, and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol, must take precedence over those on a waiting list.

The academies will not hold a waiting list beyond 31st December nor for in year admissions and parents are asked to keep in touch to find out if a place has become available.

Complaints about admissions arrangements

Any person or body who considers our arrangements unlawful, or not in compliance with the Code or relevant law relating to admissions, can make an objection to the schools adjudicator. The schools adjudicator will consider

whether the referred arrangements comply with the Code and with the law relating to admissions.

Objections to admission arrangements for entry in September 2023 must be referred to the schools adjudicator by 15 May in the determination year (2020).

Any decision made by the schools adjudicator will be acted on by the Trust and arrangements amended accordingly.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored by the Board of Trustees, who will always take due note of the guidance provided by the local Admissions Forum.

The policy will be reviewed every year, or earlier in the light of any changed circumstances, either in our Trust, in the local areas or in admissions regulations.

Any proposed changes (other than those require by a change in law) will be consulted on and where no changes are made, consultation will be undertaken at least every seven years.

Appendix 1 Contact details for Local Authorities Admissions Departments

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Website: <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/education-and-learning/school-admissions/school-admissions.aspx>

Email: admissions@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

By post: School Admissions, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Wyvern House, The Drummer, Winsford, CW7 1AH

Telephone: 0300 123 7039

CWAC Primary Admissions Booklets

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/education-and-learning/schools/admissions/information-booklets/3845-Primary-Guide-2017-18-web.pdf>

Cheshire East Council

Website:

<http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/admissions/admissions.aspx>

Email: admissions@cheshireeast.gov.uk

By post: School Admissions, Cheshire East Council, Floor 7, c/o Municipal Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 2BJ

Telephone: 0300 123 5012

CE Primary Admissions Booklets

http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/schools/admissions/information_booklets_and_sifs/information_booklets_and_sifs.aspx

Manchester City Council

Website: <http://www.manchester.gov.uk/admissions>

Email: school.admissions@manchester.gov.uk

By post: Integrated Admissions
PO Box 532, Town Hall Extension
Manchester, M60 2LA
Telephone: 0161 245 7166

Or drop it off at:

Customer contact centre
Ground floor, Town Hall Extension
Albert Square, Manchester
M60 2LA (for sat nav use M2 5DB)