

SILVER BIRCH ACADEMY TRUST

Admissions Policy

ADOPTED BY

Whittingham LGB

DATE

November 2017

REVIEW DATE

November 2018

Introduction

Whittingham Primary Academy is a two-form entry Primary School (56 pupils in each year group). The governing body of Whittingham Primary Academy applies the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend this school. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 provides a



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framework for school admissions. This policy conforms to the regulations that are set out in that Act and also further explained in the statutory School Admissions Code of Practice and the statutory Appeals Code of Practice.

Aims and Objectives

We are an inclusive school that welcomes children from all backgrounds and abilities. All applications will be treated on merit and in a sensitive manner.

The only restriction we place on entry is that of number. If the number of children applying for entry exceeds the places available, we enforce the procedure set out below in order to determine whether a child is accepted or not. It is our wish to allow parents the right to have a place at the school of their choice. However, this is not always possible, due to the excess demand on the school places available. The published figure for each year group of the school is 56 (2 forms of entry).

The level of ability of a child or any special needs that s/he may have plays no part in the admissions policy of this school, except if a parent requests special admission arrangements on these grounds.

Visiting Our School

We welcome visits from parents and children considering applying for a place at our school. This is an opportunity for parents to see what we have to offer. Visits are not a compulsory part of the admissions process and will not affect decisions on whether a place can be offered at our schools. If you would like to visit the school, you should contact the school to make an appointment.

How to apply for your child to be admitted to Whittingham Primary Academy

Whittingham Primary Academy is its own admission authority and is responsible for setting the criteria for admission, for their interpretation and for the administration of admissions to the schools. This means that it is responsible for drafting, consulting on and implementing arrangements for admissions.

The Department for Education (DfE) Admissions Code requires that admissions into the foundation year group, at the beginning of an academic year, be co-ordinated by the Local Authority for all schools regardless of who is the Admission Authority. This is to provide a better service to parents and carers. This coordination involves a common application form and a common timetable

The LA publishes an admissions prospectus each year, which gives information about how parents can apply for a place in the school of their choice. Parents have a right to express a preference for the school of their choice and they should do so on the application form. Expressing a preference does not, in itself, guarantee a place at this school. Application forms can be obtained from the Education Department of the LA or from the school office and should be completed by the date stipulated on the forms. The LA or sometimes the school notifies parents about the school place as soon as all the applications have been considered.

At Whittingham Primary Academy, children enter the main school in the academic year they become five. Parents who would like their child to be admitted to this school during the year their child is five should ensure that they complete the necessary application forms. Admission to Nursery does not mean automatic entry to the primary school and a separate application for this must be made.

Admissions Criteria

The Silver Birch Academy Trust is the admissions authority for Chingford Hall Primary Academy, Primary Academy and Whittingham Primary Academy.

Oversubscription criteria apply if there are more applications than places available. If the Academy is oversubscribed, after the admissions of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan where the Academy is named in the Plan, priority for admissions will be given to those children who meet the following criteria, in the order below:

1. Looked after children or previously looked after children who are immediately subject to adoption, a child arrangement order or special guardianship order

2. Medical reasons
3. Children with a sibling on roll at the time of admission
4. Children of staff who are employed by the Trust
5. Distance of the Academy from the child's permanent place of residence.

Sibling means:

- A full brother or sister
- A half brother or sister
- A stepbrother or stepsister
- A foster brother or sister
- The child of a parent or carer's partner living at the same home address as the applicant's child.

In all cases the sibling must be living at the same address and must still attend the school at the time of admission of the child for whom the application is being made. If you do not provide the name and date of birth of child's sibling, we will not be able to take it into account and will affect your child's chances of being offered a place at that Academy.

For all definitions, please see the websites for each Academy.

Special Educational Needs

Children who have a statement of Special Educational Needs are placed in schools under the terms of the Education Act 1996 and not through the admissions criteria referred to above. Children who have a statement of Special Educational Needs will be allocated a place at the school named on their statement.

Looked-After Children

A looked-after child is a child who is or was: in the care of a Local Authority; or being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in accordance with Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989. For admission purposes, a 'looked-after' child is a child currently in care or a child who was in care but became subject to an adoption residence, or special guardianship order, immediately after leaving care. Please note: this does not apply to children who were adopted between 1989 and December 2005.

Children 'at risk'

A child is 'at risk' if they are currently on the Child Protection Register or are under consideration for inclusion on the register, as advised by Waltham Forest's Child Protection Officer.

Medical or social reasons

Medical or social reasons can only be taken into account where information is provided by the school admission application closing date published each year by the LA. Failure to provide such information at that stage may affect whether or not the child is allocated a place at the preferred school under this criterion. Applications will only be considered under this category if they are supported by a written statement from a doctor, social worker, psychologist or other relevant independent professional. The information must confirm the exceptional medical or social reason, and demonstrate how the specified school is the only school that can meet the defined needs of the child. In all cases the medical or social need must be permanent or long term. For medical conditions, the school named must be the closest school to the child's address for consideration to be given on mobility grounds.

Examples of possible exceptional medical or social reasons:

- Any acute or chronic condition that would make it difficult for a child to attend any school other than the school closest to the child's address.
- Any acute or chronic medical condition that requires regular, long-term attendance at a particular medical establishment which is closest to the school named.
- A child and their family who are considered 'at risk' due to circumstances beyond the family's control such as fleeing domestic violence (housed in a refuge in Waltham Forest). Consideration may then be given for the named child to be given a school away from the area of their previous home address for safeguarding purposes.

- An existing restraining order that may put a family 'at risk' if the school were to be outside the remit of distance agreed by the courts.

The Admissions Panel that will determine each case will be made up of the Admissions Manager and professionals (a GP, and a social worker), and will make the final decision based on the evidence provided.

Distance

Distance is measured from the child's permanent address to the main gate of the school. Distance is measured using a straight line from the address of the child's permanent home to the main gate of the school.

All distances will be measured in miles using a computerised mapping system called Routefinder GIS. If more than one applicant lives in a multi-occupancy building (for example, flats) priority will be given to the applicant whose door number is the lowest numerically and/or alphabetically.

Where two or more applicants (who are not from multiple births) are found to live exactly the same distance from the school, a lottery tie-break draw will take place with the assistance of a third impartial party.

Admissions Appeals

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

If parents wish to appeal against a decision to refuse entry, they can do so by applying to the LA. An independent appeals panel then meets to consider all appeals by parents who have been refused a place at our school and who wish to appeal against this decision. An appeals panel's decision is binding for all parties concerned. If the appeals panel decides that we should admit a child to our school, then we will accept this and continue to do all we can to provide the best education for all the children at our school. (Details of appeal arrangements are set out in the Code of Practice on School Admissions Appeals)

In Year Admissions

The Local Authority is responsible for coordinating in school admissions.

The Pupils Admission Number (PAN)

The PAN is the number of children the school can accommodate in each year group. The standard number for our school is 56 children per year group (Reception to Year 6). We keep this number under review and the governors will apply to change the number if circumstances require.

Class Size

We teach all children (age five to eleven) in classes that have a maximum number of 28 children.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually with the Admissions authority in the light of any changed circumstances in our school or the local area. Where no changes have been made from year to year, there will be formal consultation every seven years.

