

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Whitchurch CE Infant and Nursery Academy

Admissions 2020-21

This document outlines the administration policies relating to the running of Whitchurch C.E. Infant and Nursery Academy. It is important that the Academy has a consistent policy regarding the general running and organisation of the school. General attitudes need to be well understood by all to create a happy, friendly and pleasant environment and atmosphere for all our children.

Admissions Policy

Whitchurch CE Infant & Nursery Academy welcomes children from all backgrounds, faiths, and those of no faith. The Governors of the Academy are committed to developing an inclusive school that reflects the diversity of the local community.

As well as being an inclusive academy, as a Church of England school we have a distinctive ethos and character that reflects the teaching of the Bible and Christian values. All parents applying for a place at our Church of England Academy are asked to respect this ethos and its importance to the school community. It is hoped that all children who attend our Church of England Academy will be able to participate (as appropriate) in the religious life of the school (including collective worship and religious education). This does not affect the right of parents who are not Christian to apply for a place. Indeed, through our commitment to inclusivity, families from other faiths and no faith are warmly welcomed.

For admissions to Reception application must be made through the home local authority (Shropshire Council for Shropshire residents) by 15th January in the academic year prior to which your child is due to start school. All applications received by this date will be considered and parents will be informed by the home local authority on 16th April (or next working day) if they have been allocated a place for their child. Please see the Parents Guide to Education booklet on the website, www.shropshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions and also for details of the admission arrangements.

Please also note that an application must be made for all children who wish to join Reception, even those that already attend the Academy nursery.

Admissions Criteria:

Children who have an Education Health and Care Plan, which names the school which the child should attend because their needs can be met best by that particular school, will be offered places before other children.

The admission of pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs/Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) are dealt with by a separate procedure. These children will be admitted to the Academy if our school is named on the statement/EHCP. This is a statutory entitlement under S.324 of the Education Act 1996.

After which places are allocated up to the Published Admission Number of 90 according to an agreed set of criteria in strict order of priority as shown below.

1. Looked After Children

1a Looked after children (in the care of a local authority in England or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions) at the time of making an application to the academy and all previously looked after children who were looked after, but

ceased to be so because they were immediately adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order).

b) Children who appear to the admission authority to have been in state care outside of England (accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society) and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted, subject to a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order.

2. Very exceptionally, priority may be given to a child who has a particular health reason requiring them to attend a specific school. This will only be allowed if parents/carers can provide written evidence from a medical professional that in the view of the admission authority confirms that attending that particular school is essential to the medical well-being of the child. The Trust reserves the right to contact medical professionals to ascertain the relevance of the medical condition.
3. Children living inside the designated catchment area will have next priority of admission. If there are not enough places for all the children in the catchment area, then the following criteria for admission will apply in order:
 - 3a. Priority will be given to children living within the catchment area who will have an older sibling at the Academy on the day they are due to start school.
 - 3b. After that, priority will be given to other children who live within the catchment area.
4. If there are spaces still available after the above criteria have been applied, children living outside the designated catchment area will be offered places according to the following criteria:
 - 4a. Children who will have an older sibling at the Academy on the day they are due to start school.
 - 4b. All other children.

Each category will be rank ordered according to the distance from home to school as a straight line measurement.

Notes:

A sibling connection is defined as a brother or sister, step-brother or step-sister, half-brother or half-sister, living at the same address as part of the same family unit and of compulsory school age (i.e. 5 – 16 years). Fostered and adopted siblings are also included. Older siblings must be attending the Academy on the date the younger sibling is due to start there. However, cousins or other relatives who take up residence in a home in order to establish an 'in catchment area' address will not be given priority under the sibling criterion.

If a child lives with parents with shared responsibilities, each for part of the week, the 'home address' will be the one at which the child is resident for the greatest part of the school week. Where this is equally shared, the home address will be the one used when applying for child benefit.

For admissions purposes all distances are measured as a straight line distance on a computerised mapping system between the home address and the nearest entrance gate of the relevant school by pinpointing their eastings and northings. The shortest distance being given highest priority. Where two addresses are within the same block of flats, the lowest number of flat nearest the ground floor will be deemed to be the nearest in distance.

In the event that two applications are exactly the same after all other criteria have been taken into account a tie breaker will be used. This will be by random allocation and overseen by an independent party not connected with the admissions process.

RECEPTION ADMISSIONS ONLY: If unsuccessful on allocation day, Shropshire Council will offer a review when the waiting list will be formed from those parents who advise the Admissions Team that they wish to pursue a place at the Academy. At the end of the review period, parents who have still not been successful in securing a place have the right to appeal against the decision. Parents may remain on the waiting list from the review period onwards.

RECEPTION ADMISSIONS ONLY: For the first term of Reception, Shropshire Council will continue to maintain a waiting list for unsuccessful applicants. If any vacancies arise, places will be offered to applicants on the waiting list in strict accordance with normal published oversubscription criteria.

Applications for a place outside the normal cohort (e.g. deferred Reception) will be processed in accordance with Shropshire Council's admission arrangements. Please contact the Admissions Team for more information.

Where a family are moving to a new address in Shropshire Council's area, the new address will only be taken into consideration when formal confirmation (signed tenancy agreement when no property is owned, or exchange of contracts) of the address has been received.

All applicants are required to give correct information about the genuine residential address of the child. Where any information regarding a home address is found to be fraudulent or misleading a school place may be withdrawn even if the child has been admitted to the Academy.

Mid-term or In-Year applications (RECEPTION, YEAR ONE, YEAR TWO ADMISSIONS ONLY)

Mid-term applications will be dealt with using the same admissions criteria given above. To apply for a place other than the start of Reception year, parents should apply directly to the Academy on a mid-term application form available the Shropshire Council website www.shropshire.gov.uk/schooladmissions or from the Academy. If there is a space in the relevant year group a place will be granted. If the application is for a place in an over-subscribed year group, then the Principal will meet with the Chair of Governors to consider whether additional places can be offered above the published admission number.

If a place cannot be offered, parents will receive a formal letter and information on how to appeal against the decision from Shropshire Council's Admissions Team.

Waiting List

Other than the first term of Reception year, the academy will maintain a waiting list for unsuccessful applicants until the end of each academic year. Applications for inclusion on this Waiting List must be made directly to the Academy. If any vacancies arise, places will be offered to applicants included on the waiting list in strict accordance with normal published oversubscription criteria. If a place can be offered the applicant will be expected to take up the place within 6 school weeks or by the start of the next half term, whichever is the earliest date, with the exception of Reception children who have deferred entry until later in the same academic year. If an offer of a place is refused, the name will be removed from the waiting list. At the end of the first term of the academic year of admission, the waiting list will transfer from Shropshire Council to the Academy.