THE ARCHES
COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Arches Primary School Admissions Policy

The Arches has adopted the Admission Arrangements for Cheshire West and Chester Community and Controlled Schools.

Applications for school places for the normal admission round into reception the September following the child's fourth birthday, transfer to secondary school the September following the child's eleventh birthday and applications received for in year (i.e. into any year group outside the normal admission round), shall be determined in accordance with the provisions set out below.

These admission arrangements apply to all community and voluntary controlled schools, admissions within the borough for the school year 2024-25 and for subsequent years, subject to any review.

Application Process:
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. Children reach compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. Under the Local Authority's Policy, children may start school in the reception class in the September following their 4th birthday.

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. Parents will not however, be able to defer admission beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted or beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday.

To help younger children adjust to school, schools may phase full-time admission during the reception year, admitting these children on a part-time basis. Arrangements are decided at school level.

Applications from Cheshire West and Chester residents for places in local authority maintained schools and Academies, including applications for schools maintained by other local authorities, must be made on the Common Application Form. As required by law, Cheshire West and Chester Council makes arrangements for parents and carers resident within the authority's administrative area to express up to three preferences for any English authority school/s, ranked in order of priority, using the council's common application form or online application facility and to give reasons in support of each preference, including any supporting documentation, before any places are offered.

Application Forms are available on-line at:
http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/education_and_learning/school_admissions.a spx

Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs/Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP):
Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies of all maintained schools to admit a child with a Statement of Special Education Needs / EHCP that names their school.

Published Admission Numbers:
The Council and the governing bodies have set published admission numbers (PAN), which is the number of children that will normally be admitted into the relevant age group (e.g. into the reception year in a primary school in September for the first time). The PAN for The Arches Primary School is currently set at 30.

For applications received 'in year', (i.e. those received after the first day of the school year into the relevant age group or into any other year group) the published admission number will continue to be applied as the relevant age group progresses through school.

There may be occasions when a school's organisation permits the admission of additional children into an oversubscribed cohort at the expense of places in an undersubscribed cohort. Should there be subsequent application to the undersubscribed cohort it may not be possible to admit to the published admission number. Published admission numbers for Cheshire West maintained schools are listed in the Authority's composite prospectus (Information booklet) which is available on the Council's website and from the Local Authority on request at the start of the application process.

All preferences made in accordance with the Council's arrangements will be met except where this would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources i.e. where the year group in question is full.

In some circumstances the local authority may agree with the school that admitting further pupils will not adversely affect the school in the longer term and will not have a detrimental effect on neighbouring schools. In such circumstances, a preference will be met, even where the year group is full. The local authority will not normally be able to agree admission over the published admission number where to do so would result in a breach of infant class size legislation. The law requires that infant classes (where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6, or 7) contain no more than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher.

Oversubscription Criteria:
Where more applications are received than there are places available and after the admission of pupils with statements of special educational needs or an education health and care plan, where the school is named in the statement, preferences for community and voluntary controlled schools, together with any supporting information, will be considered in accordance with the council's published oversubscription criteria as follows:

• A looked after child or a child who was previously looked after by an English Local Authority but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship, order. A looked after child is a child who is in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions, as defined in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989.
• A looked after child or a child who was previously looked after outside England but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship, order. A looked after child is a child who is in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions, as defined in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989.
• Siblings. Pupils with brothers or sisters, step brothers or step sisters, half-brothers 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 five in a primary school, years seven to ten and year twelve in a secondary school and expected to continue at the school in the following school year, at the time of admission. Siblings in year six and year eleven will not be considered under this criterion for the normal admission rounds.
• Children resident within the designated catchment zone of the school. Children will be classed within this category if they and their parents or carers are resident within the area served by the school at the time of application. However, for the normal admission rounds, the authority may consider a change of address providing the child is resident in the new property and supporting documentation is received by 11 December for secondary transfer and 19 February for reception applications, when the authority will begin the allocation of places process.
• Children not resident within a school's local catchment zone but attending a school designated as a partner school for admissions purposes. (Only applicable for secondary applications)

All applicants within each criterion will be put into a distance order with priority being given to those that live nearest to the school. Where it is identified that there are a limited number of places available and the Local Authority cannot differentiate between the applications using the nearest school criterion (criterion v) a random allocation tiebreaker will be applied. This may be required for example, where applicants reside in the same block of flats or are children of a multiple birth living at the same address.

Equal Preferences:
All preferences will be considered based on the equal preference model for allocating places, in accordance with legal requirements. This means that in the first instance, all preferences will be considered against the school's published oversubscription criteria only, i.e. without reference to the preference ranking.

Where a pupil can potentially be allocated more than one school place stated on the application form, the single offer, determined by the home authority, will be for the school ranked highest on the application form by the parents or carers.

If the pupil is a Cheshire West and Chester resident and Cheshire West and Chester Council, as the home authority, is not able to offer any of the preferences stated on the form a place will be allocated at the nearest Cheshire West and Chester school (including faith schools) with known vacancies using the authority's mapping system for measuring straight line distances from the Basic Land and Property Unit point of the home address to the Basic Land and Property Unit point of the school in miles. Where an application has been received from a parent resident in another authority and a place cannot be offered, Cheshire West Authority will not allocate a place.

Children of Multiple Births:
In relation to children of multiple births, exceptionally it may be necessary to offer places over the published admission number. This is to ensure that, as far as possible, siblings (i.e. twins, triplets or children from other multiple births) can attend the same school. The Local Authority will not normally be able to agree admission over the published admission number where to do so would result in a breach of infant class size legislation, which requires that infant classes (where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6, or 7) contain no more than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher.

Parents and Carers with Shared Responsibility for a Child:
Where parents or carers have shared responsibility for a child the place of residency will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the week (e.g. where the child wakes up between Monday to Friday). Full details must be submitted in writing to enable the Local Authority to determine which address will be used for the purpose of admission. A panel of officers will consider the information provided.

Where the Local Authority is unable to reach a decision based on the information received, e.g. where the child lives equally with both parents, the address provided for claiming Child Benefit and where appropriate, Child Tax Credits will be applied to the admission application. In such circumstances, documentary evidence must be provided.

Moving House:
Parents and carers must inform the Authority immediately of a change of address, even if details of a future change of residency were included on the application form. The Authority will require supporting evidence to show that the place of residency has changed as follows:
• A letter from the solicitor confirming the completion date;
• A signed rental agreement showing the start of the tenancy (in accordance with the arrangements set out in the Local Authority's Coordination Scheme).

In addition, the Local Authority may request further information for example, copies of council tax and utility bills or any other information considered relevant to the application, including evidence of disposal of previous

property. In respect of applications made as part of the normal admission round, (e.g. into the reception class in a primary school in September for the first time) information and supporting evidence must be received by the dates stated in part two of these arrangements. Proof of residency received after the published dates will not be used to process the application but will be used to send the decision letter on the published offer date.

Changing Preferences – Normal Admission Round Only:
For the normal admission round, the Local Authority will not accept a change of preference after the closing date for applications unless it is satisfied that there is a genuine reason for doing so, such as a recent house move. Full details must be provided to the Authority for consideration by the dates set out in part two of these arrangements. In the case of a recent house move, a letter from the solicitor confirming the completion date or a signed rental agreement showing the start date of the tenancy. Any parent wishing to change a preference after the closing date without, in the opinion of the Local Authority, a genuine reason for doing so will be advised that the application will be treated as a late application.

Late Applications- Normal Admission Round Only:
Late applications for places at Cheshire West community and voluntary controlled schools, i.e. applications not submitted to the Authority by the relevant statutory closing date will be considered after all on-time applications unless the Local Authority considers that there are good reasons for the application being late, which must be stated at the time of application, i.e. exceptional medical reasons preventing an earlier application, late removal into the area. Supporting documentation must be provided. Where supporting documentation has been received by the dates specified in part two of these arrangements and the Authority has accepted reasons stated for the late application, the application will be considered as if it had been received on time. Late applications and supporting documentation received after the dates specified will be considered after all on-time applications even where the Authority accepts that there a good reason for the late application and as such these applications may be disadvantaged in the consideration of their preferences.

Parent and carers making new applications after the published offer date will be advised of the outcome of their application after the date specified in part two of these arrangements.

In Year Applications:
In year applications are those received after the 1 September into the relevant age group or at any time into any other year group. 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. In exceptional circumstances requests can be made for entry into a year group outside the chronological age range of a child. Parents and carers considering such a request must in the first instance speak to the Headteacher of the school they will be applying for. The decision as whether it would be in the child's best interest to be educated outside the chronological year is determined by the Headteacher of the school concerned in agreement with the parent/carer.

Parents and carers, irrespective of where they reside who are seeking in year school places for schools and academies in Cheshire West and Chester authority are required to apply direct to the school or academy. Parents and carers must either complete an application form obtained from the school or complete an online form available on the local authority's website, which is directed to the school or academy for processing.

Waiting lists will be held for community and voluntary controlled schools in oversubscription criteria order and not on a first come, first served basis. Any child refused a school place will automatically be placed on the school's waiting list and will be considered together with children for whom an appeal has been received and any new applicants. Schools will be responsible for administering and updating their waiting lists and must be clear to parents and carers as to how the waiting lists will be operated on an annual basis. A school place is not considered available until the school or academy is able to remove a child from roll according to the local authority's safeguarding protocol.

Parents and carers must notify the school if there are any changes in circumstances that would impact their oversubscription criteria for the waiting list.

Right of Appeal:
Parents and carers who are not offered a place for their child at a school stated as a preference have a right of appeal to an independent appeals panel. Parents can submit an appeal in respect of each school for which admission has been refused. Application forms to appeal against a decision by the local authority to refuse admission to a community or voluntary controlled school are available on the authority's website or can be obtained by contacting the authority. All appeal application forms for community or voluntary controlled schools must be returned to the school admissions team within 20 school days of the issue of the refusal notification.

Repeat Applications:
Repeat applications will not be considered within the same school year, unless the parent's/carer's or the 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.