Newton Primary School

Admissions Policy

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A detailed document covering the procedures followed by Cheshire West and Chester can be found on their website. They also publish annually 2 booklets, one aimed at families who may have a child starting school at 4 years old and another for those children who will be transferring to secondary school. As a Local Authority School, we adhere to those arrangements and the following notes give a brief overview of the processes we follow.

Starting school – Reception Class

Prospective parents may telephone the school to arrange an appointment to see the school during our Open Days which will be held at the beginning of the Autumn Term. You will be welcomed and shown around by the Headteacher.

Families make applications online to the local authority expressing 3 choices.

The Local Authority admissions team make offers of places, usually in April. If our school has received more than 60 applications (our published admission number PAN) and after the admission of pupils with statements of special educational needs or an EHCP where the school is named in the statement, then the officers will sort the applications based on set criteria:

- 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 12 December 2024 for secondary transfer and 20 February 2025 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)

- 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.

Where a school 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 a school cannot accommodate all siblings for whom an application has been received, all sibling applicants will be prioritised in the order of:

- Siblings who live within the school's designated catchment area
- Siblings who do not live within the school's designated catchment area. All applicants within each criterion will be put into distance order with priority being given to those that live nearest to the school, as stated above.

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, a random allocation tie-breaker will be applied. This may be required for example, where applicants reside in the same block of flats or separate addresses measuring the same distance from the school.

Once offers have been made, families have 2 weeks to accept or decline a place. All families have the right to appeal against a decision not to offer a place at our school and these appeals will be heard by an independent appeals panel.

As soon as we are aware of the families who have been offered a place for their child to start in the following September, we invite them to attend a welcome evening where we can explain much more about the arrangements for starting school. We also organise for their child to attend some taster sessions in the Reception classroom so that they get to meet the staff, make friends and get used to the school building.

Secondary Transfer

For transfer to secondary school, children will transfer at the beginning of the autumn term following their 11th birthday. Only in exceptional circumstances requests can be made for early or late transfer to secondary school. The process very much follows that explained above – families

have to submit their applications by the end of October for transfer the following autumn and will receive notification of their allocated place in March.

As a school we liaise closely with local high schools and inform families of their open events. We also attend as many inter school events as possible so that the children are familiar with the schools.

In year admissions

Applications for any other school place other than those detailed above are known as 'in- year admissions' and are handled by the school. A class is deemed full if it has 30 children.

Legally, it is not possible to go above 30 in an infant class unless there are exceptional circumstances, in which case the Local Authority must authorise a permitted exception. We have admitted higher than 30 into some of our KS2 classes, but the process still remains that a class is full at 30 and a family would have to appeal against our decision not to admit above this number.

Once a family makes a formal application for a place in any year group then we follow the agreed procedures in the admissions code (see attached flow chart).

Deferred admission

Children are eligible for a Reception place from the beginning of the school year in which they become 5 years old. However, they do not become of compulsory school age until the start of the term after their fifth birthday. After a place has been allocated and accepted parents may defer the school place until later in the school year and if they do this the place will be held for the child. They cannot however defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the summer term. Parents can also request that their child attends on a part time basis until the child reaches compulsory school age.

Children educated outside of their normal age group

Parents who wish to delay entry until the following year due to specific circumstances, such as ill health or summer born children (those between 1st April and 31st August), must speak to the school and Local Authority as soon as possible as this would involve either an in-year application for Year 1 or a new application for Reception in the following year.
The decision as to which year group the child will enter will be made taking into account information from the parents and headteacher and should be in the best interests of the child.

Parents should be aware that agreement by the school to allow a child to enter Reception in the following year does not guarantee a place in the class. Parents must apply to the school in the normal co-ordinated round and the application will be considered in the normal manner following the oversubscription criteria. Parents may also choose to apply in-year for admittance to Year 1 and the child's normal age group.

Parents whose children have been educated outside of their normal age group because of being a summer born child will need to apply once again for an outside normal year group place alongside an application for a school place and should do so when their child's 'correct' cohort are making applications for a school place. This means that for a summer born child who started in Reception a year later than is usual, parents will need to apply for a secondary school place and for an out of year group place when the child is in Year 5 rather than Year 6.

These requests will be considered based on the best interests of the child and will take into account the fact the child has been educated in a different year group up until this point.

For many children, it will be right for them to remain with their adopted year group but it is possible that others may be better off joining their normal year group. All decisions will be made taking the circumstances of the case into account and considering all of the child's needs, including their social and emotional needs.

Unless there are sound educational reasons to do otherwise, the assumption would be than children remain outside their normal year group (that is, in the year which they have been educated so far).

Similarly, if the parents of a gifted and talented child wish to apply for a place outside of their child's normal age group they should speak to the school and the Local Authority.

DfE Government Summer-born children starting school: advice for parents:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summer-born-children-school-admission
Cheshire West & Chester Primary School admission link:
https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/education-and-learning/schooladmissions/reception-admissions

Appendix 1
In-Year Applications – Flow Chart

