Everton Multi-Academy Trust:

Admissions Policy for Cheshire West & Chester Schools

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EVERTON MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

ADMISSIONS POLICY (Cheshire West & Chester)

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1. INTRODUCTION

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at a school within The People's Learning Trust.
- Set out the school's arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply.
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

2. LEGISLATION STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- School Admissions Code
- School Admission Appeals Code

Schools within The Trust are required to comply with these codes and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

As Academies, each school is required to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as per their funding agreements.

3. DEFINITIONS

The normal admissions round is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home Local Authority.

Looked-after children are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- in the care of a Local Authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of its social services functions

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order.

Children reach compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday. Children may start school in the Reception class in 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 be 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 and Carers with children born between 1 April and 31 August should contact the relevant Authority to obtain information on the 'Summer Born Policy' and 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. Most children are taught in their chronological year group.

4. APPLICATION PROCESS

For applications in the normal admissions round, Parents / Carers should use the common application form provided by the Local Authority applicable to the school.

The online common application process opens from 1 September each year for admission in the following September. Exact annual dates (application opening and closing, documentation deadlines, offer/release date) will be published in Appendix A and on the relevant Local Authority pages.

Parents / Carers can use this form to express their preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order. The application process will begin on 1st September.

Local Authority Link to Application Form: Cheshire West and Chester

Parents / Carers will receive an offer for a school place directly from the school or Local Authority.

It is important to note that pupils already attending nursery at one of our Academies will not transfer automatically into the main school. A separate application must be made for a place in Reception.

Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents / Carers are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views.
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development.
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional.
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group.
- Whether they may have naturally fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.
- The headteacher's views.

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered based on the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria within this document.

Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if Parents / Carers have requested a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents / Carers will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents / Carers do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school, but it is not in their preferred age group.

5. ALLOCATION OF PLACES – ADMISSION NUMBERS

The following Academies have agreed numbers of pupils for entry in Reception as follows:

- Oldfield Primary School - 30
- Meadow Primary School - 60

Oversubscription Criteria

All children whose statement of special educational needs (SEN) or education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

If the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order, until all places are filled.

1. Highest priority will be given to looked-after children and all previously looked-after children who apply for a place at the school.

2. Priority will next be given to children who have a sibling in school who will still be attending in the following year. Siblings include step-siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address.

   Priority will not be given to children with siblings who are former pupils of the school, nor to siblings who are due to leave the school and move to high school the next year.

3. Priority will next be given to children resident within the designated catchment zone of the school. Children will be classed within this category if they and their Parents / Carers are resident within the areas served by the school at the time of application.

However, for the normal admission rounds, the Authority may consider a change of address, provided the child is resident in the new property and supporting documentation is received by the deadline as specified by the Local Authority for reception applications, when the Authority will begin the allocation of places process.

School catchment maps can be seen via the link below.

Meadow Primary School Oldfield Primary School

4. 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 the local land and property gazetteer.

Priority will not be given to children with siblings who are former pupils of the school, nor to siblings who are due to leave the school and move to high school the next year.

Attending an on-site school nursery is NOT a criterion for school entrance, and no applicant will be disadvantaged if they did not attend any on-site nursery. Where it is not possible to accommodate all pupils qualifying under one of the criteria stated above, the next criterion will also be applied to determine priority for admission.

For example, if it is not possible to 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 who 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 tiebreaker will be applied.

This may be required, for example, where applicants reside in the same block of flats or have separate addresses measuring the same distance from school.

Equal Preferences

All preferences will be considered on the basis of 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, 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 the school ranked highest on the application form by the Parents / Carers.

If the Local Authority in which the pupil is resident is not able to offer any of the preferences stated on the form, a place will be allocated at the nearest school within the Local Authority (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, the Local Authority will not allocate an alternative school place.

Children of multiple births

In relation to children of multiple births, it may be necessary to offer places over the published admission number. This is to ensure that, as far as possible, siblings (twins, triplets or children from other multiple births) can attend the same school.

In normal circumstances, the Local Authority will not be able to agree to 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 five, six or seven, contain no more than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher.

However, the School Admissions Code, December 2014, allows the admission of a sibling in the same school year (twins, triplets or children from other multiple births) as a permitted exception where one sibling can be offered the place and not the other.

This is a discretionary permitted exception and may not be agreed if the admittance of more children into a particular year group would cause prejudice to the efficient education and efficient use of resources to other children in that year group.

Children of UK service personnel

Places will be allocated in advance of the family arriving in the area for children of UK service personnel and veterans, if accompanied by an official government letter which declares a relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering area address for considering the application against Local Authority oversubscription criteria.

In addition, it may be necessary to offer places above the published admission number as the School Admissions Code, December 2014, allows the admission of a child from a force's child as a permitted exception in relation to infant class size legislation.

This is a discretionary permitted exception and may not be agreed if the admission of more children into a particular year group would cause prejudice to the efficient education and efficient use of resources for other children in that year group.

Consideration for applications for children of UK service personnel and veterans is given in accordance with the Local Authorities Armed Forces Covenant.

Parents and Carers with shared responsibility for a child

Where Parents / Carers have shared responsibility for a child, the place of residence will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the week, for example, where the child wakes up between Monday and Friday.

Full details must be submitted in writing to enable the Local Authority to determine which address will be used for admission. A panel of officers will consider the information provided. If the panel agree that sufficient evidence has been provided, then this address will be used for the purpose of assigning a criterion to the application.

Where the Local Authority is unable to reach a decision based on the information received, for example, where a child lives equally with both parents, the address provided for claiming child benefit and, where appropriate, child tax credits or equivalent will be applied to the admission application. In such circumstances, documentary evidence must be provided. Any delay in receiving any required information will result in the local authority determining residence for admission based on the information available to it.

Moving House

Parents / 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, as this may change a child's oversubscription criteria for a particular school. The authority will require supporting evidence to show that the place of residency has changed, for example, completion of sale, tenancy agreements, council tax and utility bills and any other information considered relevant to the application, including disposal of previous property. In addition, proof that the child now resides at the new property will be required, i.e. child benefit or child tax credit.

For the normal admission round, supporting evidence must be received by the date as stated in Appendix A.

In respect of applications made as part of the normal admission round, information and supporting evidence must be received by the dates as stated in Appendix A. 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.

Waiting Lists

Waiting lists will be held in oversubscription criteria order and not on a first-come, first-served basis. 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 becomes available.

Placing a child's name on a waiting list does not affect the statutory right of appeal.

Waiting lists for reception places must be held until the end of the autumn term.

Acceptable evidence for late applications (e.g., proof of house move, medical evidence) is listed on the LA website and in Appendix A. The LA admissions team will consider whether the reasons and evidence justify treating an application as on-time. Parents will be informed in writing of the decision and the reasons if an application remains late. **Changing preferences**

In respect of applications made for the normal point of entry, the Local Authority will not accept a change of preference made after the published closing date without a genuine reason, such as a recent house move. Full details must be provided to the Local Authority for consideration, along with supporting documentation.

If the Authority decides that the reason, based on the evidence provided, is not valid, then the application will be treated as a late application, and as such, notification of the outcome of that application will be made after the accept/decline date as stated in

It is important, therefore, that Parents / Carers give full consideration to the preferences they make on their online application form.

Other relevant changes of circumstances (e.g. admission of a sibling)

Further information received after the supporting documentation deadlines (Appendix A) will not be considered as part of the online allocation process. The information will be assessed after the accept / decline date, and any changes that would assign a different criterion to an application, for example, sibling, in catchment, will be applied to the application and used to determine where the child falls on a waiting list.

Late applications – Normal admission round only

Late applications for places in our 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. Such reasons must be stated at the time of application, for example, exceptional medical reasons preventing an earlier application, or late removal into the area. Supporting documentation must be provided.

Where supporting documentation has been received by the date specified in Appendix A 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 are good reasons for the late application, and as such, these applications may be disadvantaged in the consideration of their preferences.

Late applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application after the published offer date specified in Appendix A.

Accepting and declining places – Normal admissions round only

There is no longer an expectation for Parents / Carers to accept their place. However, if the family choose to not to take up a place, we ask that Parents / Carers advise the Local Authority admissions as soon as possible.

Fair Access Protocol

All Academies within the Trust participate in the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

Consultation

The Trust Board will consult on any proposed changes to the admissions arrangements. Consultation will take place between 1 October and 31 January in the determination year, and last for a minimum of six weeks. The Trust Board will consult on admissions arrangements at least once every seven years, even if no changes have been made in that time.

The Trust Board will consult with the following:

- Parents / Carers of children between the ages of two and 18, Stakeholders.
- Other admission authorities within the relevant area.
- Local Authorities.
- Any Local Authorities from which pupils have historically come.

Determination and publication of admissions arrangements

The Trust Board will publish a copy of the full proposed admission arrangements and the contact details of the individual responsible for admissions liaison on both the Trust's and each school's website.

A copy of the proposed admission arrangements will be made available upon request.

Admission arrangements will be determined by 28 February in the determination year on an annual basis, even when no changes to the arrangements have been made.

The Trust Board will notify all appropriate bodies of the finalised admissions arrangements when they have been determined.

A copy of the finalised admission arrangements will be sent to the Local Authorities for entry by 15 March in the determination year. These finalised admission arrangements will also be published on each of the Trust schools' websites by 15 March in the determination year and will continue to be displayed for the whole offer year.

Any objections to the admission arrangements will be directed to the Schools Adjudicator by 15 May in the determination year. For example, objections must be referred by 15 May 2025 for the admissions intake for September 2025.

The Trust's schools will provide the Local Authorities with all of the information they need to compile the composite prospectus by 15 March in the determination year.

The Trust Board will not revise the admissions arrangements for a school year once they have been determined, unless this would be necessary to give effect to a mandatory requirement, a determination of the School's Adjudicator, or any misprint in the admission arrangements.

In exceptional circumstances, the Trust Board may propose variations where there have been major changes in circumstances that necessitate a change. As detailed in the School Admissions Code 2021, any proposals to vary the admissions arrangements will be referred to the Secretary of State for approval.

6. IN YEAR APPLICATIONS

In-year applications are those received after 1 September into the relevant age group or at any time into any other year group.

Parents / Carers, irrespective of where they reside, who are seeking in-year school places for one of the Trust's schools, are required to apply.

Parents / Carers must complete a request via the Local Authority website.

Waiting lists will be held by the school 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: families will be called at the end of the school year to see whether they wish to continue to be on the waiting list for September of the following year.

A school place is not considered available until the school or academy can remove a child from the roll according to the Local Authority's safeguarding protocol. Parents / Carers must notify the school if any changes in circumstances would impact their oversubscription criteria for the waiting list.

7. RIGHT OF APPEAL

Understanding Appeals

If an Academy has reached its Published Admissions Number (PAN), they have no flexibility to offer more places for classes in Reception and Key Stage 1 due to infant class size regulations.

Appeals are usually not successful, and typically, a place is only allocated if either of the following applies:

- An administrative error with catchment or sibling information.

- A permitted exception applies, such as multiple births or children of UK service personnel.

When the Admission Authority can show to an appeals panel that any further admissions would breach the infant class size limit, an appeal could only be upheld (supported) if the appeals panel decide either:

- the child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had been properly implemented or correctly and impartially applied; or
- the child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had not been contrary to mandatory provisions in the School Admissions Code and part 3 of the SSFA 1998; and/or
- the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

When the Local Authority informs a Parents / Carer of a decision to refuse their child a place at a school, correspondence will include:

- The reason why admission was refused.
- Information about the right to appeal.
- The deadline for appealing.
- The contact details for appealing.

Parents / 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 / Carers can submit an appeal in respect of each school for which admission has been refused. The determination of the Panel will be made in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code and will be binding on all parties.

Appeals Process

Before submitting your appeal, we welcome the opportunity to review with you and request that you email Linda McMullen, Chief Finance & Operating Officer, at CFOO@TPLTrust.co.uk, who will arrange a convenient time to call you to discuss the process.

The application form to appeal against a decision by the Local Authority to refuse admission can be obtained by contacting the school or Linda McMullen, as above.

On the form, Parents / Carers will be required to provide details of why they believe the admissions criteria were incorrectly applied and why the child should be allocated a place.

The Trust will establish an independent appeals panel to hear the appeal. The appeal panel will perform its judicial function in a transparent, accessible, independent, and impartial manner, and operate according to principles of natural justice.

The Local Authority and appeal panel will ensure that it acts in accordance with this Code, the School Admissions (Appeal Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012, the School Admissions Code, other law relating to admissions, and relevant human rights and equalities legislation, for example, the Equality Act 2010.

Timescales

The Trust will set a timetable for organising and hearing appeals that:

- Includes a deadline for lodging appeals, which allows appellants (persons appealing against the decision) at least 20 school days from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful to prepare and lodge their written appeal.
- Ensures that appellants receive at least 10 school days' notice of their appeal hearing.
- Includes reasonable deadlines for appellants to submit additional evidence, for admission authorities to submit their evidence, and for the clerk to send appeal papers to the panel and parties.
- Ensures that decision letters are sent within 5 school days of the hearing, wherever possible. The Local Authority will publish the appeals timetable on their website by 28 February each year.
- For applications made in the normal admissions round, appeals will be heard within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals
- For late applications, appeals will be heard within 40 school days from the deadline for lodging appeals, where possible, or within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged.
- For applications for in-year admissions, appeals will be heard within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged.

Repeat applications and appeals.

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.

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.

8. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Local Authority is responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with the relevant legislation and guidance when carrying out the overall admission of pupils into the school.
- Clearly communicating any reasons for rejecting the admission of a pupil, as well as the parent's right to appeal and the appeal process.
- Implementing any advice or recommendations given by the School's Adjudicator without undue delay.

The Trust is responsible for:

- Liaising with the LA where relevant regarding admitting pupils to the school.
- Working with the LA when determining the school's capacity.
- Ensuring that the LA has all the information it needs to set admissions arrangements.

- Determining the admission arrangements on an annual basis and publicly consulting stakeholders on any proposed changes to the admission arrangements.
- Setting clear, fair and effective oversubscription criteria which do not discriminate against any pupil.
- Communicating oversubscription criteria clearly to parents.
- Notifying the LA of any in-year admissions and their outcomes.
- Making arrangements for pupils admitted through in-year admissions to start as soon as possible.
- Publishing a link to the full, determined admissions arrangements on the school's website.

The School's Adjudicator (Department of Education) is responsible for:

- Acting in line with the relevant legislation and guidance about admissions.
- Receiving concerns and objections regarding the admission of pupils and making recommendations to the admission authority as a result of these concerns and objections.
- Approving variations to determined admissions arrangements where there has been a major change in circumstances or law.

The appeals clerk is responsible for:

- Having an in-depth knowledge of the relevant appeals codes and other relevant law.
- Providing an independent and impartial service for admission appeals.
- Making the necessary administrative arrangements for hearings.
- Notifying all parties of the order of proceedings in advance of an appeals hearing.
- Responding to queries from appellants in advance of an appeals hearing or identifying who will be appropriate to respond.
- Being an independent source of advice on procedure and admissions law.
- Keeping accurate records of proceedings and providing written notification of the appeals panel's decisions.

9. ACCESSIBILITY AND ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

This policy and supporting documents are available in alternative formats (large print, translated versions, audio) on request. Please contact the Trust via email at CFOO@TPLTrust.co.uk or the school office for assistance.

APPENDIX A: TIMETABLE

The timetable changes every year and can be found on the website: Cheshire West and Chester Link to Admissions.

Details	Date
The application process starts. The online application facility opens, and paper application forms are available. Composite prospectus available	01/09/26
Closing date for applications	15/01/27
Deadline for receipt of supporting documentation. Information received after this date will not be considered until after the accept/decline date listed below	19/02/27
Offers released; parents will be informed of the school place offered	16/04/27
Waiting lists are prepared, and vacancies reallocated. Waiting lists will be held in order of the criteria.	After 16/04/27
Deadline for application appeals against local authority / governing body decisions	17/05/27
Appeal hearings (on-time applications)	By 20/07/27
Appeal hearings (late and in-year applications)	Within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged
Late applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application after this date.	After 16/04/27

APPENDIX B: APPEAL PROCESS

If you receive notification from LA that a place has not been allocated, with the reasons why, and you believe that the correct admission criteria were not applied or that your application was not processed correctly, please email Linda McMullen, Chief Finance & Operating Officer, at CFOO@TPLTrust.co.uk.

A member of staff from TPLT will contact you and provide advice on the appeal process.