

St Aidan's Church of England Academy

Admission Arrangements: Policy and procedures

Approved by Full Governing Body	July 2015
Review Date	March 2017
To be Reviewed	March 2020

St Aidan's Church of England Academy

Preface to all policies and procedures.

St Aidan's Church of England Academy is a Christian learning environment at the heart of its community. We promote care, respect and responsibility and expect high standards in all aspects of Academy life.

As a Church of England Academy we aim to build a community clearly based on the Christian values of love, forgiveness and reconciliation, integrity and the unique value of each individual. We aim to build self-esteem, model conflict resolution, protect the weak and are committed to justice and compassion. Mutual respect and trust are central within the Academy.

This policy, and its associated procedures and protocols, is based on these key principles.

The Admission of Students to the St Aidan's Church of England Academy

1. This document sets out the admission arrangements for the St Aidan's Church of England Academy, hereinafter referred to as 'the Academy'. These arrangements are without prejudice to the provisions of Annex 3 to this agreement. The document forms an Annex to the Funding Agreement between the Academy and the Secretary of State. Any changes to the arrangements set out in this document must be approved in advance by the Secretary of State.
2. The Academy will act in accordance with, and will ensure that the Independent Appeal Panel acts in accordance with, all relevant provisions of the statutory codes (the School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code) as they apply at any given time to maintained schools, and with the law on admissions as it applies to maintained schools. Reference in the codes to admission authorities shall be deemed to be references to the governing body of the Academy. In particular, the Academy will take part in the Admissions Forum set up by Darlington LA and have regard to its advice; and will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by Darlington LA.
3. Notwithstanding these arrangements, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to admit a named student to the Academy on application from a LA. Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult the Academy.

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS APPROVED BY SECRETARY OF STATE

4. The admission arrangements for the Academy for the year 2008/2009 and, subject to any changes approved by the Secretary of State, for subsequent years are:
 - a) The Academy has an agreed admission number of 140 students. The Academy will accordingly admit at least 140 students in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received;
 - b) The Academy may set a higher admission number as its Published Admission Number (PAN) for any specific year. Before setting an admission number higher than its agreed admission number, the Academy will consult those listed at paragraphs 18-19 below. Students will not be admitted above the PAN unless exceptional circumstances apply and such circumstances shall be reported to the Secretary of State.

Process of application

5. Applications for places at the Academy will be made in accordance with the LA's co-ordinated admission arrangements and will be made on the Common Application Form (CAF) provided and administered by Darlington LA. The Academy will use the following timetable for applications each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year) which, whenever possible, will fit in with the common timetable agreed by the Darlington Admissions Forum or LA:

- a) September - The Academy will publish in its prospectus information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for the following September (eg in September 2008 for admission in September 2009). This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective students and their parents to visit the school. The Academy will also provide information to the LA for inclusion in the composite prospectus, as required;
- b) September/October - The Academy will provide opportunities for parents/carers to visit the Academy;
- c) October – Closing date for CAF to be completed and returned to the LA to administer
- d) October – December - LA sends list of applications to Academy
- e) December/January - Academy sends list of students to be offered places to LA
- f) February - LA applies agreed scheme for its own schools, informing other LAs of offers to be made to their residents.
- g) 1st March - offers made to parents.

Consideration of applications

- 6. The Academy will consider all applications for places. Where fewer than 140 applications are received, the Academy will offer places to all those who have applied.

Procedures where the Academy is oversubscribed

- 7. Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below. After the admission of students with statements of Special Educational Needs where the Academy is named on the statement, the criteria will be applied in the order in which they are set out below:
 - a) Children in Public Care (Looked after Children);
 - b) Students with very exceptional medical factors and/or social factors directly relating to school placement. Applications under this criterion should be supported by written evidence from a doctor or other professional practitioner. Applications in this category will be considered on a case by case basis (see Note 2 below);
 - c) Students whose siblings (see Note 1 below) currently attend the school and who will continue to do so on the date of admission;
 - d) Students who live nearest the Academy, measured from the front door of the home address (see Note 3 below) to the main entrance to the Academy as determined by the Governing Body, by the shortest walking route judged to be safe by the Academy from time to time, using the criteria adopted by the LA.

Note 1: Definition of 'sibling'

Siblings (brothers or sisters) are considered to be those children who live at the same address and either:

- have one or both natural parents in common;
- are related by a parent's marriage,
- are adopted or fostered, or;
- their parents are married/co-habiting and children live together in the same household;
- they are children of the same household

Note 2: Medical factors

Supporting evidence for applications under the provisions of Clause 7 b) should set out the particular reasons why the Academy is the most suitable school for the student to attend and the difficulties it would cause if the student had to travel to another school. The Academy will make contact with the District Medical Officer for independent information regarding the medical factors in the application and may also seek advice from other qualified professionals or specialists where necessary.

Note 3: Home Address

This is the child's permanent address where he or she generally resides. Temporary addresses may not be used in the application for admission to the Academy.

For parents/carers who may have more than one property, reference should only be made to the property in which they and the child(ren) mainly reside.

Where parents/carers are separated and the child lives for periods with both, then the home address will be that of the parent that receives the child benefit.

If the main address has changed temporarily, for example, where a parent/carer resides with extended family during a period of sickness or takes up temporary accommodation due to building works/renovation, then the home address remains that at which the parent/carer was resident before the period of temporary residence began.

Where the temporary change of address is due to the sale of property, evidence of the particular circumstances will be required to determine the home address for the purposes of the application.

Any permanent change of address during the period from making an application to the offer being made, must be notified to the Authority immediately, as this may affect the admission offer made. In the event of a change of address affecting the application for your child to attend the Academy, the Academy will request a letter from a licensed conveyancer or a solicitor's letter confirming exchange of contracts.

Operation of waiting lists

8. Subject to any provisions regarding waiting lists in the LA's co-ordinated admission scheme, the Academy will operate a waiting list. Where in any year the Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until a month after the admission date. This will be maintained by the Academy and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.
9. The position of children on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out in paragraph 7 of this Annex. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Arrangements for appeals panels

10. Parents will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of the Academy. The Appeal Panel will be independent of the Academy. The arrangements for Appeals will be in line with the School Admission Appeals Code published by the Department for Education and Skills as it applies to Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools. The determination of the Appeal Panel will be made in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code and is binding on all parties. The Academy will prepare guidance for parents about how the appeals process will work and will provide parents with a named contact who can answer any enquiries they may have about the process.

Arrangements for admitting students to other year groups, including to replace any students who have left the Academy

11. Subject to any provisions in the LA's co-ordinated admission arrangements relating to applications submitted for years other than the normal year of entry, the Academy must consider all such applications and, if the year group applied for has a place available, admit the child. If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria shall apply. Parents whose application is turned down are entitled to appeal.

Arrangements for admitting students outside their normal age group

- 11A. If a parent seeks a place in a year group outside of their normal age group, they should complete an application form and attach a covering letter along with any accompanying documentation that details the circumstances behind their request, for example if their child has missed a significant amount of time due to ill health or they believe their child to be gifted and talented. This should be forwarded to the Academy, which will consider the request. Once a decision has been made the Admission Authority will write to the parent(s) informing them of the decision and setting out reasons for such.

Arrangements for admission of students as the Academy builds to its full capacity

12. For the Academy year beginning in September 2008, the Academy will have a Published Admission Number relating solely to students in Year 7 .
13. During the period from 1 September 2008 to the admission of Year 7 in September 2012 to the Academy, there will not be a Published Admission Number against which to consider applications for admission to all Year groups. Initially in September 2008 there will be four such Year groups reducing by one in each subsequent academic year.
14. Admission to Year groups without a Published Admission Number will be based upon the size of teaching groups already existing in the Academy and the efficient use of resources.
15. There will be a right of appeal to the Independent Appeal Panel for unsuccessful applicants.

ANNUAL PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Consultation

16. The Academy shall consult each year on its proposed admission arrangements.
17. The Academy will consult by 1 March:
 - a) The Diocese of Durham Board of Education;
 - b) The Local Admissions Forum
 - c) Darlington LA;
 - d) Any other admission authorities for primary and secondary schools located within the relevant area for consultation set by the LA;
 - e) Any other governing body for primary and secondary schools (as far as not falling within paragraph (b) located within the relevant area for consultation.

Determination and publication of admission arrangements

18. Following consultation, the Academy will consider comments made by those consulted. The Academy will then determine its admission arrangements by 15 April of the relevant year and notify those consulted of what has been determined.

Publication of admission arrangements

19. The Academy will publish its admission arrangements each year once these have been determined, by sending copies to:
 - a) Primary and secondary schools in Darlington LA;
 - b) The offices of Darlington LA;
 - c) The Diocese of Durham Board of Education;

- d) Public libraries in the area of Darlington LA for the purposes of being made available at such libraries for reference by parents and other persons, and by making copies available, without charge, on request from the Academy.
20. The published arrangements will set out:
- a) the name and address of the Academy and contact details;
 - b) a summary of the admissions policy, including oversubscription criteria;
 - c) a statement of any religious affiliation;
 - d) numbers of places and the number of applications for those places in the previous year; and;
 - e) arrangements for hearing appeals.

Representations about admission arrangements

21. Where any of those bodies that were consulted, or that should have been consulted, make representations to the Academy about its admission arrangements, the Academy will consider such representations before determining the admission arrangements. Where the Academy has determined its admission arrangements and notified all those bodies whom it has consulted and any of those bodies object to the Academy's admission arrangements, they may make representations to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State will consider the representation and in so doing will consult the Academy. Where s/he judges it appropriate, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to amend its admission arrangements.
22. Those consulted have the right to ask the Academy to increase its proposed Published Admissions Number for any year. Where such a request is made, but agreement cannot be reached locally, they may ask the Secretary of State to direct the Academy to increase its proposed Published Admissions Number. The Secretary of State will consult the Academy and will then determine the Published Admission Number
23. In addition to the provisions at paragraphs 21 and 22 above, the Secretary of State may direct changes to the Academy's proposed admission arrangements and, in addition to the provisions above, the Secretary of State may direct changes to the proposed Published Admissions Number.

Proposed changes to admission arrangements by the Academy after arrangements have been published

24. Once the admission arrangements have been determined for a particular year and published, the Academy will propose changes only if there is a major change of circumstances. In such cases, the Academy must notify those consulted under paragraph 18 – 19 above of the proposed variation and must then apply to the Secretary of State setting out:
- a) the proposed changes;
 - b) reasons for wishing to make such changes;
 - c) any comments or objections from those entitled to object.

Need to secure Secretary of State's approval for changes to admission arrangements

25. The Secretary of State will consider applications from the Academy to change its admission arrangements only when the Academy has notified and consulted the proposed changes as outlined at 19 - 20 above.
26. Where the Academy has consulted on proposed changes the Academy must secure the agreement of the Secretary of State before any such changes can be implemented. The Academy must seek the Secretary of State's approval in writing, setting out the reasons for the proposed changes and passing to him any comments or objections from other admission authorities/other persons.
27. The Secretary of State can approve, modify or reject proposals from the Academy to change its admission arrangements.
28. Records of applications and admissions shall be kept by the Academy for a minimum period of ten years and shall be open for inspection by the Secretary of State.

Please also refer to the Transfer Policy.