

Academy Admission Policy – Oldham hub

September 2024-25

1. Statutory Framework

1.1 The Harmony Trust is the admission authority for the following academies:-

- Alt Primary Academy
- Greenhill Primary Academy
- Northmoor Primary Academy
- Richmond Primary Academy
- Westwood Primary Academy

1.2 The statutory requirements of the school admission legislation and related regulations are published in the School Admission Code 2021. The code details the mandatory requirements and refers to the statutory requirements (i.e. those imposed by primary or secondary legislation) with which all admission authorities must comply.

1.3 The acts relevant to school admissions and appeals are:-

- a) Equality Act 2010
- b) Human Rights Act 1998
- c) School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- d) Education Act 1996

1.4 The Regulations relevant to school admissions and appeals are:-

- a) The School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2021
- b) The School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2014
- c) The School Admissions (Appeals) (England) Regulations 2014
- d) The School Information (England) Regulations 2008

2. Infant Class Size Legislation

2.1 Infant classes (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher (as defined in Section 4 of the SSFA 1998). Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain a 'permitted exception' for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit.

2.2 Subsequent guidance has made it clear that local authorities / admissions authorities are expected to ensure that older children who have experienced the benefit of restricted class numbers should continue to benefit from a similar limit on the size of junior classes.

3. Duty To Comply With Parental Requests

3.1 Section 86 of the School Standards & Framework Act 1998 states the following:

“Subsection 1) A local education authority shall make arrangements for enabling the parent of a child in the area of the authority; to express a preference as to the school at which he



wishes education to be provided for his child in the exercise of the authority's functions; and to give reasons for his preference.

subsection 2) Subject to subsection (3), a local education authority and the governing body of a maintained school shall comply with any preference expressed in accordance with arrangements made under subsection (1).

subsection 3) The duty imposed by subsection (2) does not apply if compliance with the preference would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources."

4. Planned Admission Numbers

- 4.1 The PAN is set for each 'relevant age group' and is the maximum number of pupils that can be admitted to the academy.
- 4.2 The planned admission numbers for all Harmony Trust academies covered by this policy are listed at appendix A.

5. Application Procedures

- 5.1 Oldham residents will apply for a reception school place by using the on-line Oldham Council facility. Further information can be found by referring to the link below:- [How to apply | How to apply | Oldham Council](#)
- 5.2 Applications received after the appropriate closing date will be regarded as late unless, in Oldham Council's judgment, there are significant and exceptional reasons for the lateness. Proof of special circumstances will be required.
- 5.3 Late applications are not considered until all on-time applicants have been allocated places.
- 5.4 A child's name will be automatically placed on the waiting list for any school where they have been refused a place in the allocation round. The waiting list will only be maintained by the Local Authority for the Autumn Term.
- 5.5 Oldham residents, who wish to apply for a place in the first year at school after the first school day in September 2024, or to any other age group at any time, will apply for an in-year transfer (this application is done online, via Oldham Council's website).

6. Oversubscription criteria

- 6.1 The duty to comply with parental preferences requires that all applicants will be offered a place providing there are enough places in the academy for everyone who applies.
- 6.2 If the number of applications exceeds the admission number it will be necessary to determine which pupils can be offered a place by applying the following oversubscription criteria in priority order.
- 6.3 All schools are required by section 324 of the Education Act 1996 to admit to the school a child with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan that names the school. This is not an oversubscription criterion and all children with EHC Plans naming a school will be admitted before other children are offered a place.

6.4 For all other applications the following criteria will be applied to prioritise children for admission:-

Criterion 1

Children in public care (looked after children) or a child who was previously looked after including those children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order), immediately following having been looked after and those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Criterion 2

Those children who are considered to have exceptional medical needs or exceptional welfare considerations which are directly relevant to the academy concerned. Parents must submit evidence to support their application under this criterion (see note (a) below).

Criterion 3

Those children who will have a sibling attending the academy when the younger child is admitted.

A sibling is defined as a brother or sister, step-brother or step-sister and half-brother or half-sister. A sibling must be living at the same address and not be a cousin or other relative. This criterion will apply to children who already have a sibling currently in attendance at the preferred academy and also to children who have a sibling applying for a place at the preferred academy that can be offered a place but are not currently on roll.

Siblings who are in Under 3s units, Nursery & Year 6 the year they apply for the place will not be counted as siblings in attendance at the school.

Criterion 4

Geographical proximity to the academy, with those families living next nearest to the academy having higher priority. Distance is measured in a straight line between the home postcode (see note (c) below) and the academy postcode, measured electronically by GIS software within the admission database using Post Office data and Ordnance Survey data completed on our behalf by Oldham Council.

Notes;

(a) Exceptional medical reasons must be supported at the time of application by a letter from a GP, hospital consultant or other medical professional. Providing evidence does not automatically mean that a place will be allocated under this criterion.

Exceptional welfare considerations must be supported at the time of application by a letter from a supporting agency (social worker, family support worker) indicating how the circumstances relate to the academy preference. Providing evidence does not automatically mean that a place will be allocated under this criterion.

(c) Tie breaker - Should it be necessary to distinguish between applicants with equal priority within any of the above criteria, children will be prioritised in proximity order, with those living nearest the school being admitted first. The distance is measured as a straight line from the child's home address to the academy property measured between the two central data

points of the home postcode and academy post code. Measurements are calculated using Geographical information System mapping software based on Ordnance Survey and Postcode data completed on the Trust's behalf by Oldham Council.



7. Permanent Address

- 7.1 The only address that can be considered is the address of the adult with whom the child is permanently resident. Where a child stays with another parent for part of the week, further enquiries may be made in order to determine where the child is permanently resident.
- 7.2 If a childminder, grandparents or another member of the family cares for the child on a daily basis at another address, we cannot consider this address for the purpose of its admission process.
- 7.3 Oldham Council will undertake any necessary investigations and an allocated place may be withdrawn if a false address is given or one where the child is not actually living when s/he is not at school.

8 Applications from overseas children

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of parents to check that their children have a right, under their visa entry conditions, to study at a UK school.
- 8.2 Overseas Nationals entering the UK who wish to apply for a state-funded school need to check that they have a right of abode or the conditions of their visas otherwise permit them to access a state-funded school.
- 8.3 Until 31 December 2020, all European Economic Area ('EEA') and Swiss national children will continue to have the right, under UK immigration law, to enter the country to access a school. Any EEA or Swiss national arriving in the UK by 31 December 2020 is eligible to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme, and continue to be able to study in schools in England as they do now if their application is successful.
- 8.4 Foreign Nationals cannot use the 6 month visitor visa or a 6 month short-term study visa to enter the UK to enrol as a pupil at a school. Find out what these visas can be used for on the visitor visa and short-term study visa pages.
- 8.5 Find out more about visas and immigration and the EU Settlement Scheme for EEA and Swiss citizens, by utilising the links below
<https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration>
<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>
- Irish citizens' right to live in the UK will not change. Irish citizens do not need to apply for the EU Settlement Scheme, but their family members who are not Irish or UK citizens will need to apply.
- 8.6 Oldham Council or the Harmony Trust have a right to contact the Home Office if they have concerns about a particular child's immigration status. If the Home Office finds that the child's visa does not entitle him or her to enter the country to attend a state-funded school, it will be up to the Home Office to take any further action it considers appropriate. A local authority, admission authority or school must not deny a child a place or remove him or her from the school roll on the basis of the Home Office's findings.

9. Intention To Move House

- 9.1 An intention to change address cannot be considered until such a move has actually taken place and proof is available to substantiate the change of address. Proof of change of address for primary allocation will be accepted up until 7 February 2021.

**10. Twins or Triplets**

- 10.1 In cases where twins, triplets, or other multiple birth siblings are split when allocations take place, they will be allocated a place over the Published Admission Number and will remain excepted pupils for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit.

11. Flats and equal distances

- 11.1 In the event of two or more children living equal distant from the school, e.g. blocks of flats, the place will be decided by drawing lots, the first name drawn will be offered the place.

12. Unsuccessful Applications

- 12.1 On completion of the allocation of places, date to be determined by the Local Authority, there may be applications where none of the parent's preferences have resulted in the offer of an academy / school place. If it has not been possible to comply with any of the parent's preferences Oldham Council will identify all the schools with vacant places and allow parents to submit a further preference.

Oldham Council has a responsibility to ensure that there is a school place available for all children resident within the borough. Should parents fail to secure a school place for their child the council will offer a place at a school that has vacant places. If more than one school is identified the LA will determine the school to be offered by selecting the school closest to home.

13. Admission of Children outside their normal age group

- 13.1 Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.
- 13.2 School admission authorities are required to provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday, but flexibilities exist for children whose parents do not feel they are ready to begin school before they reach compulsory school age.
- 13.3 Summer Born (1st Entry to School), A parent who chooses not to send their summer born child (those born between 1st April and 31st August) to school until they have reached compulsory school age may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group - to reception rather than year 1.
- 13.4 Where a parent requests their child is admitted out of their normal age group, the school admission authority is responsible for making the decision on which year group a child should be admitted to. They are required to make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned.
- 13.5 There is no statutory barrier to children being admitted outside their normal age group, but parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group.
- 13.6 Admission authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and on the basis of evidence provided from appropriate professionals where relevant, for example educational psychologist. Parents will be informed of their statutory right to appeal. This right does not apply if they are offered a place in another year group at the school.

The process to apply for Delayed Entry:

A formal request **must** be made, in writing, to the Harmony Trust stating which academy you wish to be considered for delayed entry. Any supporting evidence must be submitted that you wish to be considered.

A request for delayed entry to Reception class **must** be made at the same time as applying for a place for normal entry. This will allow enough time for your request to be considered before the National Offer Day in March.

Such an application should be supported in writing by an educational, medical or social care professional independent of the family, demonstrating a serious detriment to the child if he or she were not to be allowed delayed entry.

14. Deferred Entry:

14.1 Parents/carers can request that their child attends part-time until they reach compulsory school age, or that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the same academic year. Your child must start school the term after they turn five.

14.2 A request for deferred entry can be made directly to the academy once a place has been offered.

14.3 The decision-making process for Delayed Entry:

The Harmony Trust CEO will be the decision-maker regarding requests for delayed admission. They will be guided by the views of the academy Principal.

In most circumstances the decision will be considered and communicated before the national offer day in March. The decision will be given in writing.

Factors that may be taken into consideration include:

- The needs of the child and the possible impact of them entering the year 1 class without having first attended the reception class;
- In the case of children born prematurely, the fact that they may have naturally been born into the lower age group if they had been born on their expected date of birth;
- Whether delayed social, emotional or physical development is adversely affecting their readiness for school;

14.4 Successful application for Delayed Entry:

You can apply for a reception place for your child the following year. Your application will be ranked alongside any other applications in accordance with the oversubscription criteria for the Academy / Trust. There is no guarantee that a place will be offered at any of your preferred schools. If your child is refused a place you will have a statutory right to appeal.

If you change your mind about your school preferences or are not offered a place at any of the schools for which delayed entry has been agreed, we cannot guarantee to offer a reception class place at any other school for which a delayed entry request has not been made.



14.5 **Unsuccessful application for Delayed Entry:**

There is no statutory right of appeal against the refusal of a request for delayed entry. However, if you are dissatisfied you have the right to complain through Harmony Trust's Complaints policy.

Moving to Junior or Secondary School for a pupil already admitted under Delayed Entry:

Where a child has been educated out of their normal age group, the parent may again request admission out of the normal age group when they transfer to junior or secondary school. It will be for the admission authority of that school to decide whether to admit the child out of their normal age group. They must make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the child's best interests and will need to bear in mind the age group the child has been educated in up to that point.

15. **Appeals**

- 15.1 All parents have the right to appeal against the refusal of a school place by submitting an appeal to the Independent Appeal Panel. If parents wish to appeal they can do so by completing a School Admission Appeal Form and returning it to Oldham Council, Constitutional Services. A decision by an Admission Appeal Panel is binding on the council, the Trust and parents. Details of this process will be sent out with the offer of a school place e-mail.

General Information and Contacts

Harmony Trust
0161 260 0482
info@theharmonytrust.org

School Admissions Team
0161 770 4213
ecs.pupils@oldham.gov.uk

SEND Team
0161 770 4269
ehcinfo@oldham.gov.uk

Useful links:

Department for Education
Telephone 0870 000 2288
www.education.gov.uk

Office of the Schools Adjudicator
www.education.gov.uk/schoolsadjudicator



Appendix A

| School | PAN SEPT 2024 |
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PRIMARY

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|---------------------------|-----------|
| Alt Primary Academy | 45 |
| Greenhill Primary Academy | 60 |
| Northmoor Primary Academy | 90 |
| Richmond Primary Academy | 60 |
| Westwood Primary Academy | 30 |