



## Admissions Policy for Victorious Academies Trust Academies 2020 – 2021 Academic Year

### Aims

- 1 This policy:
  - Explains **how to apply** for a place at academies within the Trust;
  - Set out the school's **arrangements for allocating places to the pupils** who apply; and
  - Explains **how to appeal** against a decision not to offer your child a place.
- 2 This policy may be amended in writing at any time by agreement between the Secretary of State and the Academies Trust. Where there is a proposed change in admission arrangements the Trust will consult on these proposals.

### Legislation and statutory requirements

- 3 This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):
  - School Admissions Code; and
  - School Admission Appeals Code.
- 4 As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the **School Standards and Framework Act 1998**.
- 5 This policy complies with the Trust funding agreements and Articles of Association.
- 6 Within Tameside the Trust will take part in the Admissions Forum set up by Tameside MBC and have regard to its advice; and will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by Tameside MBC and the local in-year fair access protocol.

### Definitions

- 7 The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school place at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.
- 8 **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 exercise of its social services functions.
- 9 **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
- 10 A child reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

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- 11 **Rules for siblings** - Included in this factor are step siblings and half siblings living at the same address and who will be attending the relevant academy at the expected time of admission.
- 12 **Rules for Residence** - Where your child lives normally during the school week with more than one parent at different addresses, the home address for the purposes of school admissions will be the one where the child spends the majority of term time. If you can show that your child spends an equal amount of time at both addresses during school term time, you can choose which address to use on the application.
- 13 If you have more than one home, we will take as the home address the address where you and your child normally live for the majority of the school term time.
- 14 The address from which distance will be measured will be the permanent residential address, as at the closing date for applications of the parent with whom the child is normally resident. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week, the home address is the address from which the child travels to school for the majority of school days per week.
- 15 In the event of distances being the same for 2 or more applications where this distance would be the last place/s to be allocated, the place will be allocated to the pupil that is nearer using walking distance as measured using the local authority's school admissions data mapping software.
- 16 An adoption order is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A 'residence order' is as an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 8 of the Children Act 1989. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).
- 17 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.
- 18 In the first instance admissions and appeals for any Tameside Academies will be managed by Tameside MBC on the Trust's behalf.
- 19 **Distance** - For all Tameside Academies distance will be measured as a straight line from the child's home address, using the address point assigned by the National Land and Property Gazetteer, to the main gate to the school property. Measurements will be made using the local authority's school admissions data mapping software, which uses a Geographical Information System based on Ordnance Survey.
- 20 Where oversubscription occurs in applying either criteria i. ii or iii at 44 below, priority will be given to those pupils living nearest the school, measured as a straight line (as above).

#### **Annual Procedures for determining Admission Arrangements - Consultation**

- 21 The Trust shall consult the following parties on an academies proposed admission arrangements for a minimum of eight weeks between 1 November and 1 March in the 'Determination Year':
  - i) Tameside MBC;
  - ii) the admission forum for Tameside MBC;

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- iii) any other admission authorities for primary and secondary schools located within the relevant area for consultation;
- iv) any other governing body for primary and secondary schools (as far as not falling within paragraph c)) located within the relevant area for consultation;
- v) affected admission authorities in neighbouring local authority areas; and
- vi) parents living in the relevant area for consultation whose children have attained the age of two but are not above compulsory school age and who are or will be eligible to apply to be admitted to an academy.

22 Such consultation shall be in line with the requirements of the Codes and relevant admissions legislation, which at the date of this Agreement is section 89 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended, and Regulations under that section. Tameside MBC will carry out the consultation on behalf of Victorious Academies Trust.

23 Consultation in line with paragraph 21 is not required in any year where the following conditions are met:

- i) the admission arrangements were consulted upon in one or both of the previous two years; and
- ii) there have been no changes, or proposed changes, since the last consultation.

24 As soon as any changes are made to arrangements, or proposed, the consultation cycle in paragraph 21 must be followed for the next determination year.

25 The Trust will consider comments made by those consulted in accordance with paragraph 21, including any requests to amend the proposed admission number, before determining the admission arrangements for an academy within the Trust.

26 The Trust will determine each academy's admission arrangements annually by 15 April of the Determination Year and notify consultees listed in paragraph 21 what has been determined within 14 days of that decision being made. The Trust will determine admission arrangements for entry in September by 28 February in the determination year.

#### **How to apply**

27 For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in). This maybe an electronic form. You can use this form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools (6 choices in Tameside Local Authority), in rank order.

28 You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority. Please note, pupils already attending a nursery based within any 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**

29 Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group. Parents may request that their child is admitted to a year group outside their normal age range, for instance where the child is gifted or talented or where a child has suffered from particular social or medical issues impacting on their schooling.



30 Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of 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 naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- The headteacher / principal's views

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31 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 on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

32 Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents 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.

### Allocation of places

#### Admission number for each school within the Trust

33 The Trust has agreed admissions numbers for each academy subject to any changes approved or required by the Secretary of State.

34 In any specific year, the Trust may set a higher admission number than the agreed admission number for an applicable year group at an academy. Before setting an admission number higher than its agreed admission number, the Trust will consult those listed at paragraph 21. Pupils will not be admitted in any year group above the published admission number for that year group unless exceptional circumstances apply and such circumstances shall be reported to the Secretary of State.

| Academy Name:                | Address:                                       | PAN: |
|------------------------------|--|------|
| Discovery Academy            | Porlock Avenue, Hattersley, SK14 3LE           | 30   |
| Gamesley Primary School      | Grindleford Grove, Gamesley, Glossop, SK13 6HW | 45   |
| Greenside Primary School     | Greenside Lane, Droylsden, M43 7RA             | 60   |
| Inspire Academy              | Mossley Road, Ashton under Lyne, OL6 9RU       | 60   |
| Poplar Street Primary School | Ravenswood Drive, Audenshaw, M34 5EF           | 60   |
| Yew Tree Primary School      | Yew Tree Lane, Dukinfield, SK16 5BJ            | 75   |

#### Process of Application for Reception

35 Arrangements for applications for places at academies within Tameside will be made in accordance with the Tameside MBC's co-ordinated admission arrangements and will be made on the through the on-line Common Application process provided and administered by Tameside MBC. The process can be accessed here <http://tameside.gov.uk/admissions>

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- 36 The Trust will use Tameside MBC's timetable for applications for the academies, each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year). This will fit in with the indicative timetable below for the co-ordination of admission arrangements within Tameside MBC, to be agreed by the Admission Forum:
- By **September** - The Trust will publish on the Trust website information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for the following September (e.g. in September 2019 for admission in September 2020). This will include how to find out the details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective pupils and their parents to visit the academies. The Trust will also provide information in relation to the academies to Tameside MBC and other relevant local authorities' for inclusion in the composite prospectus, as required;
  - September/October** - The Trust will provide opportunities for parents to visit the academies;
  - October** – the on-line Common Application process to be followed. In Tameside the process can be accessed here <http://tameside.gov.uk/admissions>.
- 37 The national closing date for applications are as follows:
- 31 October for secondary applications; and
  - 15 January for Primary applications.
- 38 Changes to preferences, ranking order, or pupil details, will not be allowed after the closing date of **15 January**, except in exceptional circumstances, for example, if the family has recently moved address. Evidence must be provided to support the request. An intention to change address cannot be considered by the local authority until the move has actually taken place and proof is available, or parents may provide a solicitor's letter confirming an exchange of contracts on a property, or a tenancy agreement and proof of disposal of current property. No changes can be considered even where there are exceptional circumstances, once information has been exchanged with other admission bodies because the allocations process has commenced. In the case of primary schools the cut-off date is the **7 February 2020**.
- 39 Notification of offers of a single school place will be sent out to parents on **16 April 2020**. These notifications will also inform parents of their right of appeal, and who to contact, if an application has not been successful.
- 40 Parents will not receive multiple offers.
- 41 Victorious Academies Trust and our academies will ensure its application processes enable parents to apply before these deadlines.
- 42 Where fewer applicants than the published admission number for the relevant year groups are received at an academy, the Trust will offer places to all those who have applied.

#### **Procedures for admission where an academy is oversubscribed**

- 43 Children with an Education Health and Care Plan where the school is named will be allocated places before the oversubscription criteria are applied. Where, in any year an academy receives more successful applications for places than there are places available the following criteria will apply:

**(i) Looked after Children or children who have previously been looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order.**

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A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

**(ii) Children and families with exceptional medical or social needs and / or SEN.**

Written evidence must be provided by a suitably qualified professional – e.g. a GP or consultant for medical needs, or a social worker for social needs – the information must confirm the exceptional medical or social need and demonstrate how the specified school is the only school that can meet the defined needs of the child. A panel of Governors made up from the academies Local Governing Board will make a decision as to whether to admit a child under this criterion, using the evidence provided. Parents and carers are responsible for providing all information in support of an application by the closing date, an academy will not ask for additional information. All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence.

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**(iii) Siblings**

This will apply where there are brothers or sisters attending an academy at the time of application, and who will be still be attending at the time of admission – the September when a pupil goes into Reception. Preference will be given to children living nearest to the academy.

The sibling criterion includes natural brothers/sisters, half-brothers/sisters, step-brothers/sisters, adopted brothers/sisters, brothers/sisters of fostered children, children of the parent/carer's partner. In each case they must be living at the same address. This allows for the admittance of children whose siblings will still be attending the preferred school.

**(iv) All other applications on distance**

Preference will be given to pupils living nearest to an academy, taking into account ease of access to, and distance from, alternative schools.

- 44 Ease of access will be considered when parents provide details of particular reasons which mean their child could reach the nearest school but would face a disproportionately long journey to another school if denied admission to their nearest school. Details must be provided on the on-line form.

**Operation of waiting lists**

- 45 Academies will operate a waiting list until the end of the first term after the start of the school year. This will be maintained and it will be open to any parent to ask for their child's name to be placed on the waiting list. Any child that is unsuccessful at their first assessment can request a second chance in the assessment process, within an agreed time limit.
- 46 Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out above. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

**Arrangements for admitting pupils to other year groups, including to replace any pupils who have left an academy**



- 47 Local authorities will co-ordinate admissions for in-year applications and for applications for year groups other than the normal point(s) of entry. This will not affect an academies' right to determine which applicants have priority for admission.
- 48 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, our academies will consider all such applications and if the year group applied for has a place available, admit the child unless one of the permitted reliefs applies. If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria shall apply. Parents whose application is turned down shall be entitled to appeal. Parents shall only be entitled to appeal once in any academic year.

### **In-year admissions**

- 49 Parents wishing to apply for an in year transfer to a school in Tameside should apply using the School Transfer Request Form. The School Transfer Request Form can be obtained from the Headteacher of the school the child currently attends, if in Tameside or it can be downloaded from the Tameside Council website: [www.tameside.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.tameside.gov.uk/admissions).
- 50 Forms should be fully completed and submitted with any additional/supplementary documentation/evidence to the School Admissions Team to enable their application to be considered as quickly as possible.
- 51 If you want to transfer your child to a school in Tameside, you must apply through Tameside Council even if you live in another area. If you want to apply for a school in another area, you will need to contact that area for further details of what you need to do.
- 52 If a place is available in the requested year group, parents will normally be offered that place but there are some exceptions (see Fair Access Protocol section).
- 53 Parents will receive an offer of a school place through Tameside Council and this can take up to 20 school days.
- 54 All local authorities have a Fair Access Protocol for in year transfers that ensures the speedy admission of pupils who may experience difficulty in being allocated a school place, for example, if they have been out of school for a long period of time. With specific short term exceptions, all schools in Tameside are participants in the protocol, which may result in schools admitting pupils over their published admission number. Full details of the In Year Fair Access Protocol can be found on the Council's website <http://www.tameside.gov.uk/schools/primarytransfers>

### **Appeals**

- 55 If your child's application for a place at the school is unsuccessful, you will be informed why admission was refused and given information about the process for hearing appeals. If you wish to appeal, you must set out the grounds for your appeal in writing and send it to the following address: [info@victoriousacademies.org](mailto:info@victoriousacademies.org) or FAO Admissions, Victorious Academies Trust, c/o Inspire Academy, Mossley Road, Ashton under Lyne, OL6 9RU.