



Admissions Policy

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Signatories

Head of School	Mrs C Brown	
Board of Governors		

Review

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This policy sets out the admissions policy of the Rivermead Inclusive Trust.

However, sections 6 and 7 set out the oversubscription criteria, and approach to in-year admissions, specific to our primary schools.

1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- o Explain how to apply for a place at a school in the Rivermead Inclusive Trust ('the Trust')
- o Set out the arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- o Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

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

- o [School Admissions Code](#)
- o [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

We are required by our 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](#).

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

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

Looked-after children, as defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989, are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- o In the care of a local authority, or
- o Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

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

- o Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- o Became subject to a child arrangements order (defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of Children and Families Act 2014), or
- o Became subject to a special guardianship order (defined in section 14A of the Children Act 1989)
- o IAPLAC (Internationally Adopted Previously Looked after Children) - as defined in the Medway Council Co-ordinated admissions scheme. This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted. A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

A child reaches **compulsory school age** on the prescribed day following their 5th birthday (or on their 5th birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

A **parent** is any individual who holds parental responsibility, as defined under the Children Act 1989, or any person who has care of a child, where the child lives with them either full or part time and they look after that child.

4. How to apply

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). If you are in Medway Local Authority admissions should be made electronically online on Medway Council's website

<https://admissions.medway.gov.uk/Synergy/Admissions.aspx>

or paper form (RCAF) which can be collected in person from Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, ME4 4TR.

You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

The level of ability of a child or any special needs that s/he may have plays no part in the admissions policy of allocating places, where we are properly equipped to deal with the needs of the child.

Please note, pupils already attending one of our nurseries will not transfer automatically into reception in the attached school (or any of our other schools). A separate application must be made for a place in reception.

5. Deferred start

Our schools meet the agreed criteria concerning the delivery of the Foundation Stage of Learning in accordance with the Local Authority's policy and will admit four-year-olds to the Foundation Stage classes in one intake in September.

Parents/carers are not obliged to start their child at school until the beginning of the term after their child is five.

Parents/carers who have been offered a September place may defer their child's admission until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year without losing the offer of a place.

6. Part-time attendance

Parents/carers can also opt for their child to attend part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

7. Admission of children outside normal age group / Delayed start to next academic year

7.1 Admission process

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group. Parents/carers of children born between 1 April and 31 August (summer born) may decide to delay their child's entry to school until the September following their fifth birthday.

The school will consider individual requests to defer entry to Reception year to the following academic year on a case-by-case basis. This may be based on academic, medical, social, emotional or behavioural need or if the child is a premature child who would have fallen into a lower year group had they gone to full term. To make a request, parents/carers should submit their request in writing to the Headteacher / Head of School.

All requests will be carefully considered but it cannot be guaranteed that such requests will be approved. To be considered parents/carers must follow Medway Council's published protocol for the admission of summer born children. 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. In accordance with this protocol parents/carers should apply for school places at the correct time for their child's chronological year group at the same time as submitting their request for delayed entry to ensure that they can secure a school place if their request is not granted. This means that requests for delayed start should be made prior to or at the time parents/carers would normally be applying for school places for the following year.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and 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
- Headteacher / Head of Schools' views

If the request is declined and the parent/carer still decides to defer entry until the following year, any place that may have already been offered in the chronological Reception year cannot be held open until the next academic year. This means that the place offered will be withdrawn and the family will have to re-apply as an in-year admission for the following academic year for Year 1. The child may miss Reception year completely in this scenario.

If the deferred entry is agreed and parent/carers wish to proceed with delayed entry, they must contact Medway Council Admissions to cancel their application for their child's chronological (usual) year group. A new application must be submitted by the parents/carers for entry to the delayed year group. This must be done during the window where other children starting Year R are also applying. It must be noted that an agreement to a delayed entry does not automatically agree a place for the following year as normal admission criteria will be applied in the deferred year group.

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 but it is not in their preferred age group.

Parents/carers are not able to defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday.

7.2 Admission of children outside normal age group / Delayed start to next academic year - Process flowchart

If agreement has been obtained from the relevant Head Teacher – delayed admission will be upheld and the application for the chronological year group cancelled.

A new application will have to be made by the parent during the application period for the 'delayed' year group and the agreement letter must be provided at that time.

If agreement has not been obtained from the relevant Head Teacher – the application for the chronological year group will be processed. The child will be expected to start school during the chronological year group.

Parents seek the written agreement of the Head Teacher of each school they wish to apply for. This should be done before the closing date for on-time applications for the year group the child would normally be admitted to.

Parent meanwhile submits an application during the usual admission application period for the child's date of birth.

A place will be secured at a named preference, wherever possible.

If a named preference cannot be offered, a place will be secured at the nearest school to home address with a vacant place available.

For those who have been approved delayed entry and a preference cannot be offered, a place will be secured at the nearest school to home address with a vacant place available which also agrees to admit the child outside of their chronological year group. There is no guarantee that another school will agree to this, therefore it is possible at that point that the child would need to be admitted in-year to their chronological year group.

8. Allocation of places

8.1 Published admission number (PAN)

Our school's published admission number (PAN) for entry into Reception is 90.

If siblings from multiple births (twins, triplets, etc) apply for a school and the school would reach its Published Admission Number (PAN) after admitting one or more, but before admitting all of those siblings, the school will offer a place to each of the siblings, even if doing so takes the school above its PAN.

If the admissions are to Year R, and so result in a breach of infant class size legislation, the additional pupil(s) will be treated as "excepted" for the time they are in an infant class or until the numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit, as defined in the School Admissions Code.

8.2 Oversubscription criteria

The following criteria apply to all of the primary schools in the Rivermead Inclusive Trust ('the Trust')

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plans name one of our schools will be admitted to the school before any other places are allocated. As a result of this, published admissions number will be reduced accordingly.

If our schools are not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that one of our schools receives more applications than the number of places 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 with siblings on the roll of the school and still attending in the following September.**

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.

3. Priority will next be given to children on the basis of medical or social need.

The Trust defines medical needs as a need that means your child or a family member living at the same address has an exceptional medical and/or social need that makes attendance at a particular school essential. 'Medical need' does not include common medical conditions, such as asthma or allergies. 'Social need' does not include a parent's wish that a child attends the school because of a child's aptitude or because their friends attend the school or because of routine child-minding arrangements.

The Trust requires official letters from a medical practitioner and acknowledgement of how this school admission is required to meet this particular need rather than other schools, as supporting evidence if you are making an application on the basis of medical or social needs.

4. Priority will next be given to children of staff at the school, in either of the following circumstances:
 - a. The member of staff has been employed at the school for 2 or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
 - b. The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
5. Priority will next be given to children of UK service personnel and crown servants. Evidence will be required for this oversubscription criteria to be applied.
6. Priority will then be given to nearness of children's homes and ease of access to the school.

Children will be ranked according to the distance from their home to the school with those living closest being ranked highest. All distances and routes calculated are for

the purposes of prioritising the application for admissions only and there is no expectation that a child should use this to walk to school. Distances and routes calculated will represent the shortest route to school from the child's home address using roads and paths that are known to the graphical information software (GIS) utilised by School Admissions.

The start point:

The centre point of the nearest road or footpath known to the GIS system to the seed point of the child's home (as defined by Ordnance Survey).

This may not always be the postal address road, in circumstances where an alternative road or footpath is nearer to the seed point of the property. Where a child's home is situated on a new road the distance calculation will begin from the nearest available known road plotted in the GIS. New property developments may be subject to this.

The end point:

This will be either a pre-defined point within the school site or the centre point of the road adjacent the school site.

The same end point is used for all distance calculations to the school concerned.

Routes/Footpaths:

The distance calculated is the shortest available route known to the Medway GIS (using the centre point of the streets and other available routes).

Not all footpaths, cut-throughs, shortcuts and new roads are known to the GIS system.

Where a route is not known to the GIS system an alternative route will be used.

Distances are measured from a point defined as within the child's permanent home to a point defined as within the school as specified by NLPG. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody – the school gates.

For the purpose of this oversubscription criteria, a child's home address will be considered to be where he/she is resident for the majority of nights in a normal school week where shared responsibility is in place.

In cases of equal shared care, both parents must agree which address should be used on the application. For applications made in the normal round, if there is no agreement, the local authority will decide which address will be used.

8.4 Tie break

In the case of 2 or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, we will use the distance between the school and a child's home as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. Priority will be given to children who live closest to the school.

In the case that there are 2 or more applications where the distance from their homes to school is the same and cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, we will use random allocation as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. The random allocation process will be that numbers will be assigned to pupils and then drawn from an electronic randomiser. This process will be independently verified.

8.5 Waiting list

Each of our schools will maintain a clear, fair and objective waiting list for children entering Year R until 31 August of each school year of admission. If your application is unsuccessful,

please call the school directly to be given information about how to add your child's name to the waiting list. Once the prescribed procedure has been followed, your child's name will then be added to the waiting list. Where places become available, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria outlined in section 8.2. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received, or when their name was added to the list.

Under the School Admissions Code, looked-after children, previously looked-after children, and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol (see section 8.6 below) must take precedence over those on the waiting list.

8.6 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in our local authority's Fair Access Protocol (FAP). 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 and before anyone is considered from the waiting list. Eligibility for the Fair Access Protocol does not limit a parent's right to make an in-year application to any school for their child. Any application will be processed in accordance with the usual in-year admission procedures (see section 9). Please see Medway Councils FAP protocols for more detail.

8.7 Challenging Behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. The exception to this is where we may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that isn't the normal point of entry, in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraphs 3.10 to 3.13) apply.

8.8 Children of UK service personnel and crown servants

Families of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, will be allocated a place in advance of the family arriving in the area, provided a place is available and the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date.

We will use the address at which the child will live when applying our oversubscription criteria, provided the parents provide some evidence of their intended address. Alternatively, the unit or quartering address will be used as the child's home address when considering the application against the oversubscription criteria, where this is requested by a parent.

8.9 Withdrawing an offer of a place

We will not withdraw an offer unless it has been offered in error, a parent has not responded within a reasonable period of time, or it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

Where a parent has not responded to the offer, we will give them a further opportunity to respond and explain that the offer may be withdrawn if they do not respond.

If an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, we will consider the application afresh and a right of appeal will be offered if an offer is refused.

We will not withdraw an offer of a place once a child has started at one of our schools except where that place was fraudulently obtained. In these circumstances, we will consider the length of time that the child has been at the school before deciding whether to withdraw the place.

9. In-year admissions

You can apply for a place for your child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC plans name one of our schools will be admitted to the school.

Likewise, if there are spaces available at the school in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to the waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available, it will be filled by 1 of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in section 8.2 of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions should be sent to the school office or call the school office to speak to the office team who will inform you

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their in-year application in writing within 15 school days.

10. Appeals

If your child's application for a place at one of the schools in our Trust 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 school directly.

You can find details of the appeals timetable on the schools and Trusts webpage- [Trust Policies - Rivermead Inclusive Trust](#)

Appeals will be heard by an independent appeal panel.

11. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the local advisory board every year.

Whenever changes to the admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the PAN), the board of Trustees will publicly consult on these changes.

The board of Trustees will consult on the admission arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there have been no changes during that period. Consultation will be for a

minimum of 6 weeks and will take place between 1 October and 31 January of the school year before the arrangement are to apply.