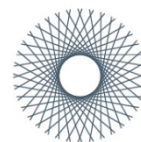


Consultation



AGORA
LEARNING
PARTNERSHIP

Draft Admissions Policy for 2022/23

The Agora Learning Partnership, as the admissions authority for all schools/academies within the Trust, has a statutory duty to consult with the public whenever new admission arrangements or changes to existing arrangements are planned, in line with the Admissions Code of Practice.

Consultation is an important part of the process in setting school admission arrangements. We are therefore consulting stakeholders on the proposed admission arrangements for schools within our Trust for 2022/23.

These arrangements are for children who will be starting school for the first time in September 2022, or changing from one school to another between September 2022 and July 2023.

The attached draft admissions policy is similar to the proposed policy for the other schools in the Agora Learning Partnership.

The consultation runs for six 'school' weeks from **Monday 26 October 2020 to Sunday 6 December 2020**. The agreed (determined) admission arrangements will be published on the school website by 15th March 2021.

The intention is to have one standard policy and arrangement in place however each school will have a unique document that reflects the school's admission number, whether it has a school nursery, whether it is a junior school etc.

The change proposed to our policy mirrors a change proposed to local authority maintained school policies, to clarify the policy on twins and multiple births by making clear that if one child is allocated a place under a higher rule, the other children will be allocated over the school's PAN (if necessary) for that allocation round. The policy will remain the same as our current policy except for this minor change.

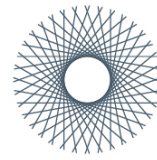
The amended paragraph will read:

We will admit over the school's published admission number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated a place at a school.

You can comment on the proposed admission arrangements by email or in writing to:

admissions@agoralearning.co.uk

Agora Learning Partnership
The Orchard Primary School
Gammons Lane
Watford
WD24 5JW



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ORCHARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Agora Learning Partnership

Admissions Policy for 2022/23

Orchard Primary School (the “School”) is an academy within the Agora Learning Partnership (the “Trust”)

The Trust is the admissions authority for the School and is therefore responsible for determining and implementing the admission arrangements for the School each year in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2014 (“the Code”) and other legislation.

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

The School is fully inclusive and welcomes applications for the admission of children of all abilities and needs, including those with special educational needs and disabilities. The School fully complies with its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBER (“PAN”)

The School will provide for the admission of the appropriate number of children in accordance with the published admission number (“PAN”). The PAN for Reception Year at the School is **60**.

This means that the School will admit up to that number of children in the September of the school year to which this policy applies.

Where fewer applications are received than the PAN, the School will offer places to all those who have applied.

Applications for places in Reception should be made on the Local Authority’s Common Application Form. This is accessible on the LA’s website (www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions) and must be submitted in accordance with the LA’s published deadlines for applications, namely Friday 14th January 2022.

Late applications will be accepted but will not be considered until all applications received on or before the application deadline have been processed, which will reduce the chance of achieving a place for the child.

CHILDREN WHO CURRENTLY HAVE A NURSERY PLACE AT THE SCHOOL

The School has an on-site nursery. Where a child attends the School’s nursery, an application for admission into Reception Year must still be submitted. There is no automatic transfer from the nursery to Reception Year at the School.

CHILDREN WITH AN EDUCATION HEALTH AND CARE PLAN

There are separate statutory procedures in place which govern the admission of children with special educational needs (“SEN”) for whom an education health and care plan (“EHC plan”) has been issued by their Local Authority. This means that the parents of children who have an EHC plan should not apply for admission of their child to the School under this Admission Policy. If parents have a preference for the School to be named as the provider in their child’s EHC plan, the Local Authority needs to be made aware of this so that they can consider whether the School is suitable in consultation with the child’s parents and the School.

Where a child’s EHC plan names the School as the provider, the child will be admitted to the School even if this will result in the published admission number (“PAN”) for that year group, or the statutory maximum infant class size, being exceeded. Where admission is to Reception Year in September (i.e. in the normal admission round), the number of places available within the PAN for other children will be reduced.

Where a child is in the process of being assessed by the Local Authority to establish whether an EHC plan should be made, parents should speak to the Local Authority before applying for admission under this Admission Policy, to check the stage the assessment has reached and whether a decision to make an EHC plan will be made before the application deadline as, if it has, an application under this Admission Policy will not be necessary.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

After the admission of pupils with an Education and Health Care Plan and where the Academy is oversubscribed, priority for admission will be given to those children in priority order below:

- 1. Looked after children** and previously looked after children (or became subject to a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order) with those living nearer receiving higher priority.

A “looked after child” is a child in public care, looked after by an English or Welsh local authority, at the date on which the application is made. A “previously looked after child” is a child who was in public care, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order immediately after being in public care.

To be included in this category, the application for admission must be supported by the relevant Local Authority’s Children’s Services Department. In the case of a previously looked after child, a copy of the adoption or special guardianship order must also accompany the application for admission.

Children in the process of being placed for adoption are classified by law as children looked after providing there is a Placement Order and the application would be prioritised under Rule 1.

Children who were not “looked after” immediately before being adopted, or made the subject of a child arrangement order¹ or special guardianship order², will not be prioritised under rule 1. Applications made for these children, with suitable supporting professional evidence, can be considered under rule 2.

¹ Under the provisions of the Children and Families Act 2014, which amended section 8 of the Children Act 1989, residence orders have now been replaced by child arrangements orders which settle the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live.

² Under 14A of The Children Act 1989, an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian or guardians

2. Children who the Trust accepts have an **exceptional medical or social need** for a place at the school with those living nearer receiving higher priority, this includes children previously looked after from abroad.

This category gives priority to children for whom Orchard Primary School is the **only** school that is appropriate for the child to attend because of the child's exceptional medical or social need, this includes children previously from abroad who were cared for by the state because he or she would not otherwise have been cared for adequately and subsequently adopted.

Applications under this priority must be accompanied by a Priority 2 Form, which is available from our website.

Part A of the Priority 2 Form must be completed by the parent(s) before being provided to the child or parent's doctor, social worker or other relevant independent professional who must then complete Part B, sign, stamp and date the form. The doctor, social worker or other relevant independent professional must expressly confirm not only the nature of the exceptional medical or social need of the child, but also the reason why it is appropriate for the child to attend the school, why no other school is suitable, and the reasons why this is the case.

Evidence that the child was previously cared for by the state abroad because he or she would not otherwise have been cared for adequately and has been subsequently adopted must be provided.

Applications for children adopted but previously looked after abroad will be considered under this rule and accepted if the child's previously looked after status and adoption is confirmed. Hertfordshire's "Virtual School" will be asked to verify all such applications.

The completed, signed and stamped Priority 2 Form must be sent to the address provided on the form. The Academy will then inform HCC of any successful applications as part of the allocation process. An application under this priority will **not** be considered in cases where the completed, signed and stamped Priority 2 Form is received after the common application form has been submitted.

Applications under Priority 2 will be considered by the Academy Governing Body (or the relevant Admissions Committee).

3. **Linked School:** *This rule does not apply to this school (for infant and junior schools only)*
4. **Children with a brother or sister already attending the school** and who will still be attending on the date of admission with those living nearer receiving higher priority

Note: this category includes adopted or foster brothers and sisters, half brothers and sisters, stepbrothers and sisters or a child looked after or previously looked after and in every case living permanently in a placement within the home as part of the family household from Monday to Friday at the time of this application. Parents/Guardians should note that in all these cases, the brother or sister must be living at the same address as the child for whom the application is being made.

A sibling link will not be recognised for children living temporarily in the same house, for example a child who usually lives with one parent but has temporarily moved or a looked after child in a respite placement or very short term or bridging foster placement.”

For the avoidance of doubt, other children within the family (for example, cousins) who live at the same address because members of the child’s extended family (for example, aunts and uncles) also live there, will not be regarded as siblings for the purpose of this priority.

In Year admissions: the sibling may be in the school’s final year as long as they will still be in attendance at the time of admission

5. Children of school staff where:

- a. the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made; and / or
- b. where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable shortage with those living nearer receiving higher priority.

For the purposes of satisfying these criteria, a member of staff is defined as a permanent member of the teaching staff, or a permanent member of the non-teaching staff. This definition does not include contract staff. This definition does not include peripatetic staff employed by HCC. The child must be living permanently with the member of staff including step children and the children of partners living permanently in the same house.

6. All other children.

Children not falling into any of the above categories will be allocated places in this category by reference to the proximity of the child’s home address (as defined by this policy) to the School, with those living nearer receiving higher priority.

DISTANCE MEASURING

Hertfordshire County Council’s ‘straight line’ distance measurement system is used for all home to school distance measurements. Distances are measured using a computerised mapping system to two decimal places. The measurement is taken from the AddressBase Premium address point of your child’s house to the address point of the school. AddressBase Premium data is a nationally recognised method of identifying the location of schools and individual residences.

In the case of multi-dwelling buildings (for example, an apartment block), the distance will be measured from same GIS determined point in the building regardless of the actual location within the building of the child’s home address, with the tie breaker being applied if more than one application is received for children living in the building (see below).

TIE BREAKER

Where two applications cannot otherwise be separated because the distance between the child’s home address (as defined by this policy) to the Academy is the same, the tie break will be random. Every child entered onto the HCC admissions database has an individual random number assigned, between 1 and 1 million, against each preference school. When there is a need for a final tie break the random number is used to allocate the place, with the lowest number given priority. the order in which places will be allocated will be determined by random lottery using the Local Authority’s software in the presence of a person who is independent of the Academy.

CHILD'S HOME ADDRESS

The address given on the application form must be the child's main home address, which will usually be the address at which Child Benefit is claimed or if there is no entitlement to Child Benefit, then the address at which the child is registered with their GP will be used. Child benefit cannot be the sole determiner of home address in situations where a child lives in more than one location. A business address or the address of a parent with whom the child does not live, a relative or a child minder must not be given.

The child's home address stated must be a residential property that is the child's only or main residence, and not an address at which he or she might sometimes stay or sleep.

Where a child spends part of the week with different parents/carers the home address will be the address at which the child spends the majority of weekday nights during term time. If two addresses are given, only one will be accepted, which will be the address which meets the definition stated above. Where there is a dispute over which address is the child's main home address, the address at which Child Benefit is claimed or if there is no entitlement to Child Benefit, then the address at which the child is registered with their GP will be deemed to be their main home address.

Proof of residence or offer of letting from landlord will be required.

STATUTORY MAXIMUM INFANT CLASS SIZE

The maximum number of pupils legally permitted to be in a class in Reception Year, Year 1 or Year 2 class is 30 pupils.

There are specified circumstances in which some categories of children will not be counted towards the class size, allowing for these children to be admitted to a class containing 30 or more pupils without breaching the statutory maximum infant class size. These children are known as "excepted pupils" until the class size falls back to 30 pupils. Parents are referred to Paragraph 2.15 of the Code (which is accessible on the Department for Education's website) for further details in this respect.

Children of multiple birth

We will admit over the school's published admission number when a single twin/multiple birth child is allocated a place at a school.

CHILDREN OF UK SERVICE PERSONNEL AND CROWN SERVANTS

The School will accept applications for the admission of the children of UK Armed Forces Personnel with a confirmed posting in the area of the School, or the children of Crown Servants returning from overseas to live in the area of the School, in advance of them arriving. These children do not have to be living at the stated home address at the application deadline, as all other children do.

The application for admission must be supported by an official letter declaring the relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address, which will be used as the child's home address for the purpose of applying this Admission Policy.

FAIR ACCESS

The school is committed to taking its fair share of vulnerable children who are hard to place, in accordance with locally agreed protocols. Children admitted under the protocol will be prioritised above those on the waiting list and can be admitted over the PAN.

WAITING LISTS

The Academy will operate a waiting list for each year group. Where in any year the Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until the end of the academic year; parents must make a new In Year application every academic year. This will be maintained by the Trust and it will be open to any parent/guardian to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. 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 REPLACING ANY PUPILS WHO HAVE LEFT THE SCHOOL ('IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS')

You can apply to change school during the school year. We call this an "in year admission".

To apply for an in-year admission to Orchard Primary School please complete the 'In year Admissions Form' available from <http://www.orchard.herts.sch.uk/> and send it and any supporting documentation to admin@orchard.herts.sch.uk

We'll let you know if you're successful within 10 working days, once we receive your application, proof of address and any additional documents needed. If the year group applied for has a place available, the School will admit the child. If more applications are received than there are places available, the place will be allocated applying the oversubscription criteria set out above.

You need to accept or decline any place offered. If a place is not available, you will be given the opportunity to have your name added to the waiting list. You will also have a right to appeal the decision.

AGE ON ADMISSION TO RECEPTION YEAR

All children are entitled to a full-time place in Reception Year at a primary school from the September following their fourth birthday. Children do not, however, reach compulsory school age until the first of three prescribed dates after their fifth birthday. These prescribed dates are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

For example, a child who will reach the age of five years on 18 November will not reach compulsory school age until the following 1 January, a child who will reach the age of five years on 22 March will not reach compulsory school age until the following 1 April and a child who will reach the age of five years on 3 June will not reach compulsory school age until the following 31 August.

Deferred entry and part-time attendance

Parents offered a place for their child have a right to defer entry, or to take a place up part-time, until the start of the term beginning immediately after their child has reached compulsory school

age. However, places cannot be deferred until the next academic year. Parents can also ask that their child attends on a part-time basis until they reach compulsory school age.

However, the start date for a child born between 1 April and 31 August who will not reach compulsory school age until 31 August (known as a “summer born child”) cannot be deferred later than the first day of the last term (usually when the School reopens after Easter) without losing the place achieved, which will then be allocated to another child. Parents of “summer born children” can, however, choose to delay their child starting school for a whole school year (see below).

Parents may also choose to send their child to school part-time until they reach compulsory school age (i.e. on one of the three prescribed dates stated above). Unlike the right to defer entry, this right can be exercised during the last term in the case of “summer born children”, and can also be exercised in combination with the right to defer the child’s start date until later in the school year, as set out above.

For example, a child born on 18 November could start school part-time from 1 September and then full-time from 1 January, and a child born on 22 March could start school part-time from either 1 September or 1 January and then full-time from 1 April.

Delayed entry for “summer born children”

Parents of summer born children have the following options in relation to their child:

1. To start school full-time in Reception Year in the September following their fourth birthday in the usual way; **or**
2. To retain the place they have achieved for their child in Reception Year and decide that their child will start school later in the school year (i.e. deferred entry) and/or attend part-time, as set out above; **or**
3. To lose any place achieved for their child in Reception Year and delay (rather than defer) their child starting school for one whole school year (i.e. following September).

Parents choosing to exercise the third option will need to decide whether they want their child to be admitted to Year 1 in the following September with their usual age group (subject to their being an available place in Year 1, as no place will be have been reserved for the child) or be admitted to Reception Year in the following September with children below their normal age group.

The latter option requires parents to submit a separate Application for Admission Outside Normal Age Group to the AGB of the School (see below). In the event that the Application for Admission Outside Normal Age Group is approved by the Academy Governing Body, there is no guarantee that a place will be available in the preferred year group. Once a decision has been made, the School will apply its oversubscription criteria to decide whether a place can be offered in that age group. This means that, although the parents may have obtained the School’s agreement to their child being admitted below its normal age range into Reception Year one school year after being eligible to start school, their child may not achieve a place in Reception Year at the School the following year.

In the case of summer born children seeking to delay starting school for one school year and then to be admitted into Reception Year below their normal age group, an application for admission into Reception Year using with the child’s normal age group should be made in the usual way accompanied by a request to be admitted into Reception Year the following year (by completing the “Application For Admission Outside Normal Age Group Form” with supporting evidence).

Provided the application is received in time, parents will receive a response to their request before primary national offer day. If a request is agreed, the application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If a request is refused, the parent must decide whether to:

- a. accept the offer of a place for the normal age group (if an offer is made); or
- b. refuse it and make an in year application for admission to Year 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday (there is no guarantee that places will be available in Year 1 if the school is oversubscribed).

Where a parent's request for admission outside of the normal age group for summer born children is agreed, a new application must be submitted as part of the main admissions round the following year.

Parents do not have a right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like. However, parents may make a complaint about the School's decision not to admit their child outside their normal age group.

ADMISSION OF CHILDREN OUTSIDE 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 his or her schooling. All such requests will be considered on their merits and either agreed or refused, on that basis. If a request is refused, the child will still be considered for admission to their normal age group.

Parents wishing to submit a request for their child to be admitted outside their normal age group should submit an "Application For Admission Outside Normal Age Group Form" which is available from <http://www.orchard.herts.sch.uk/>

The process for requesting such an admission is as follows:

With the application, parents should request that the child is admitted to another year group (state which one), and the reasons for that request. Parents will submit any evidence in support of their case with the application, for instance from a medical practitioner, Headteacher etc. Some of the evidence a parent might submit could include:

1. Whether the child is 'summer born' and is seeking admission to a year group other than reception (or is seeking admission to reception rather than year 1);
2. Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
3. Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional;
4. Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group;
5. Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

This is a non-exhaustive list. There may be other factors that the Academy Governing Board will consider. The school will consider each case on its merits, taking into account the individual circumstances of the request and the child's best interests. We will also ensure the parent is aware of

whether the request for admission out of age group has been agreed before final offers are made, and the reason for any refusal. Requests for admission out of the normal year group will be considered alongside other applications made at the same time. An application from a child who would 'normally' be a year 1 child for a reception place will be considered alongside applications for reception.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR APPEALS PANELS

Parents/Carers will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of the School. The Appeal Panel will be independent of the School. The arrangements for Appeals will be in line with the Code of Practice on School Admission Appeals published by the Department for Education. The determination of the appeal panel will be made in accordance with the Code of Practice on School Admission Appeals and is binding on all parties.

Normal admissions round

Parents wishing to appeal who applied through Hertfordshire's online system (www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions) for the normal admissions round should log in to their online application and click on the link "register an appeal". Out of county residents and paper applicants should call the Customer Service Centre on 0300 123 4043 to request their registration details and log into www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals and click on the link "log into the appeals system".

In-year admissions

For in-year admissions, we will write to you with the outcome of your application and, if you have been unsuccessful, the county council will write to you with registration details to enable you to login and appeal online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schoolappeals

THE SCHOOL EXPECTS PARENTS TO PROVIDE TRUE AND ACCURATE INFORMATION. IF IT IS DISCOVERED THAT FALSE INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED, THE OFFER OF A PLACE IS LIKELY TO BE WITHDRAWN.