ADMISSIONS POLICY

SOUTH CUMBRIA
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

South Cumbria Multi Academy Trust Admissions Policy

1 Introduction

1.1 South Cumbria Multi Academy Trust is a is a Multi Academy Trust located in the local authority area of Cumbria.

1.2 Admission to all state funded schools is governed by the School Admissions Code 2021 (Code). Under the Code, the Trust is the 'Admission Authority' for the School, and has a legal duty to formally determine the 'admission arrangements' for each year's intake in accordance with the requirements of the Code.

1.3 The Trust Board delegates the task of determining the admission arrangements each year to the Governing Body of the School. The School's admission arrangements are formally determined by the Governing Body, with admission related decisions being made by a committee of three Governors known as the Admission Committee.

1.4 This policy and all other admission related documents referred to herein and used during the admission process, together form the School's admission arrangements. Any proposed changes to the admission arrangements are subject to statutory consultation before they can be determined. Determined admission arrangements can only be varied in specific circumstances, and usually only with Secretary of State consent.

1.5 All-through schools cater for children aged 4-16. In these schools, children in Year 6 of the primary phase will automatically transfer to Year 7 of the secondary phase without the need to apply for a place. Additional places are available for new pupils.

1.6 Schools that are covered by this policy are as follows.

Admitting Authority	South Cumbria Multi-Academy Trust		
Academy	**Age Range**	**Local Authority**	**School Capacity**
Chetwynde School	3-16	Cumbria	525
Ormsgill Nursery and Primary School	3-11	Cumbria	245
Vickerstown School	3-11	Cumbria	210

2 Definition of a 'Parent'

2.1 In this policy and in education law, the definition of a 'parent' includes a natural or adoptive parent of the child (regardless of whether the child lives with them, has contact with them, or they have parental responsibility for the child). It also includes a person who is not a natural or adoptive parent of the child, but who has care of and/or parental responsibility for the child.

3 Inclusivity and Equality

3.1 The School is fully inclusive and welcomes applications for the admission of children with special educational needs (SEN), physical, mental or behavioural disabilities and other protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010. The School's admission arrangements are determined and implemented with its equality duties in mind, including the public sector equality duty (PSED).

4 Children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC plan)

4.1 Children with an EHC plan are admitted to school under separate statutory procedures which are managed by the child's home Local Authority, not under the school's determined admission arrangements. Parents or Carers of children with an EHC plan should therefore liaise with their child's home Local Authority's SEN team if they want them to propose to name the School in their child's EHC plan and consult with the School as to the suitability of the proposed placement.

4.2 Where, after consultation, the child's home Local Authority names the School in the child's EHC plan, the child must be admitted. Where this happens in the normal admission round (i.e. entry to Reception Year in September), these children will be allocated their places before all other applicants, which will reduce the number of places left within the published admission number (PAN). At other times, the child will be admitted whether or not the PAN will be exceeded.

5 Infant Class Size Legislation

For admission to infant classes, i.e. Reception class, Year 1 and Year 2, Government legislation limits the size of these classes to 30 pupils per class. The Trust adheres to this legislation when allocating places in schools.

6 Application Procedure for Admission in September

6.1 Applications for admission to schools in September are known as applications made 'in the normal admission round'.

6.2 Applications in the normal admission round must be made directly to the child's home Local Authority by completing and submitting a Common Application Form (CAF), which is available to download/complete online via the child's home Local Authority's website, by the application deadline. Parents or Carers must state a preference for the School in the CAF.

6.3 Parents or Carers should carefully consider the oversubscription criteria stated above to determine whether other documentation must be submitted in support of the application. This documentation must be submitted to the child's home Local Authority by the application deadline. If not, the child will be placed in the next oversubscription category that applies.

6.4 Applications received after an application deadline will be treated as late applications, which means they will be processed after all on-time applications have been processed and places allocated thereby reducing the chances of the child being offered a place.

7 Application Procedure for In-Year Admission (Mid-Year/Other Year Groups)

7.1 Applications for admission to schools other than in September, are known as applications made 'outside the normal admission round' or 'in-year admission'.

7.2 Applications for in-year admission must be made directly to the Local Authority by completing and submitting an in-Year Application.

7.3 Parents or Carers should carefully consider the oversubscription criteria stated above to determine whether other documentation must be submitted in support of the application. This documentation must be submitted at the same time as the application, or the child will be placed in the next oversubscription category that applies.

8 Communicating Offers to Parents or Carers

Our schools have agreed not to disclose information to Parents or Carers about the offer of places until the National Offer Day, which may vary each year.

9 Published Admission Number (PAN)

9.1 The Trust is not required to consult on the PAN, where schools propose either to increase or keep the same PAN. We will consult in accordance with statutory guidance, if we propose a decrease to the PAN. We acknowledge that voluntary controlled schools have the right to object to the Schools Adjudicator if the PAN set for them is lower than they would wish. The Trust will notify the appropriate local authority of their intention to increase the school's PAN and reference to the change should be made on the school's website when necessary. If, at any time following determination of the PAN, we decide that any school within the Trust is able to admit above its PAN, we will notify the local authority in good time to allow the local authority to deliver its coordination responsibilities effectively. A separate application must be made for any transfer from the school Nursery class to the primary school (Reception). In our oversubscription criteria, we give priority to children eligible for the early years pupil premium.

10 Oversubscription Criteria for Reception/Y7

10.1 Where there are more applications than places available, the order in which places will be allocated will be as follows:

10.1.1 Children with an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHC plan)

Children with an EHC plan are admitted to school under separate statutory procedures which are managed by the child's home Local Authority, not under the school's determined admission arrangements. Parents or Carers of children with an EHC plan should therefore liaise with their child's home Local Authority's SEN team if they want them to propose to name the School in their child's EHC plan and consult with the School as to the suitability of the proposed placement.

10.1.2 Where, after consultation, the child's home Local Authority names the School in the child's EHC plan, the child must be admitted. Where this happens in the normal admission round (i.e. entry to Reception Year in September), these children will be allocated their places before all other applicants, which will reduce the number of places left within the published admission number (PAN). At other times, the child will be admitted whether or not the PAN will be exceeded.

10.1.3 **Looked after, previously looked after children, adopted from care, special guardianship**

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, in England. A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after in England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements or residence order, or a special guardianship order. All references to previously looked after children in this Code mean such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Applications in this category must be accompanied by a signed and dated letter from the child's social worker or former social worker confirming their status, to be received by the application deadline in the normal admission round.

10.1.4 **Children with a sibling at the School in Reception Year to Year 11**

The sibling must attend the School in Reception Year to Year 11 at the time when the applicant child is admitted. For the purpose of this category, a 'sibling' is a full sibling (sharing both Parents or Carers), a half sibling (sharing one parent), an adopted sibling, a long-term foster sibling (i.e. not a temporary placement), a step sibling (one child's parent married to the other child's parent), or a child of their parent's cohabiting partner. In all cases, the sibling must live at the child's home address (as defined by this policy) as part of the same core family unit. For the avoidance of doubt, a child of a friend or extended family member (e.g. cousin) will not be a 'sibling' for this purpose, even if they live at the same address as the applicant child. For inclusion in this category, Parents or Carers must state the sibling's details in the application form.

10.1.5 **Children of staff members employed at South Cumbria Multi Academy Trust**

The staff member must have a permanent contract, be permanently based at South Cumbria MultiAcademy Trust for more than 50% of their normal working hours each week during term time, and have been:

- Employed for at least two years at the time of application; or
- Recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage

For the avoidance of doubt, it is not possible for a staff member to have priority at more than one School within the Trust.

For the purpose of this category, a 'child' of a staff member is their natural or adopted child (whether they live with the staff member or elsewhere), and/or their step-child or child of their cohabiting partner (where they live and sleep at the staff member's home address for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Friday night during term time).

For the avoidance of doubt, a step-child or child of a cohabiting partner, who lives elsewhere, will not be eligible for a place under this category

10.1.6 **Children already within the Multi Academy Trust**

A child must be enrolled in a school already within South Cumbria Multi-Academy Trust at the time of application to be considered eligible under these criteria.

10.1.7 **All other children**

This category will include all children who do not fall into any of the oversubscription categories above.

11 Tie Breaker

11.2 Where there are more applications than places remaining in any of the oversubscription categories, the order in which places will be allocated will be determined by the distance between the child's home address (as defined by this policy) and the School, with those living nearest receiving highest priority.

11.3 Distance measurements will be undertaken using the Local Authority's computerised Geographical Information System [GIS] This measures a straight-line measure between the centre of the pupil's home address and the main entrance to the school building as determined by the LA in conjunction with the Headteacher at the time the determination was made.

12 Child's Home Address

12.1 The child's home address is the residential (not business) address of their parent (as defined in this policy) at which they live and sleep for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday night during term time. It will usually be the address at which they are registered with their GP, hospital, dentist and/or optician, and/or where Child Benefit/Child Tax Credit (if eligible) is claimed, at the time of application.

12.2 Where any uncertainty arises in respect of the child's home address, the School reserves the right to seek documentary evidence to determine which address meets the definition stated above. For the avoidance of doubt, it is the address which meets this definition that will be used to process the application, which may not be the address given by the parent.

12.3 Where the child/child's family is/are not living in the area of the School at the time the application is submitted, the application will be accepted and processed using the child's new address where it is supported by supporting evidence (for example, a signed tenancy agreement, formal mortgage offer, HMLR title deed/document, NHS/GP registration card/letter, etc.).

12.4 Applications for the admission of children of UK Armed Forces personnel with a confirmed posting to the area, or Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area, will be accepted and processed where it is supported by an official letter giving a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address for use in applying the oversubscription criteria.

13 Statutory Maximum Infant Class Sizes

13.1 The statutory maximum infant class size for Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2 is 30 pupils per teacher.

13.2 However, certain categories of children may still be admitted where this would result in a class size exceeding the statutory maximum. These categories are set out in regulations and summarised at Paragraph 2.15 of the Code. Where this happens, the additional pupils are 'excepted pupils' who do not count towards the class size until it falls back to 30, when they will no longer be regarded as 'excepted pupils'.

14 Twins, Triplets and Siblings of a Higher Multiple Birth (Reception Year to Year 6 Only)

14.1 Where a twin, triplet(s) or sibling(s) of a higher multiple birth achieves a place at the School within the PAN in the normal way, but their twin, triplet(s) or sibling(s) of a higher multiple birth does not achieve a place, the School will admit their twin, triplet(s) or sibling(s) of a higher multiple birth even where this means exceeding the PAN.

15 Fair Access

15.2 We recognise that the purpose of fair access protocols are to ensure that, outside the normal admissions round, unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are found and offered a place quickly, so that the amount of time any child is out of school is kept to the minimum.

15.3 We will endeavour to ensure that our admission arrangements uphold the interests of looked after children and previously looked after children and other potentially vulnerable pupils including those who have already been admitted to the school.

15.4 Our policy and consideration of fair access requests reflects the DFE principles and expectations on all parties to ensure Fair Access Protocols operate effectively at a local level. It is recognised that

the Trust may have to work with different protocols according to which local authority an individual academy is located in.

15.5 We acknowledge that School Admissions Code gives local authorities and schools, including academies, the freedom to develop and agree protocols which best serve the needs of children in their area.

16 Waiting Lists

16.1 Waiting lists for oversubscribed schools will be drawn up in accordance with the admission policy. Children who are not admitted will have their name placed on a waiting list.

16.2 The expression of interest list is ranked strictly in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out in this policy, and not by reference to the date that the child's name was added to the list. Should a place become available, interested parties will be invited to apply.

16.3 Children placed at the School under the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol will take priority over children on the waiting list.

16.4 If a place becomes available within the admission number, the child whose name is at the top of the list will be offered a place. This is not dependent on whether an appeal has been submitted.

17 Statutory Right of Appeal

17.1 Parents or Carers have a statutory right of appeal against the refusal of a place at a School. This right applies to a refusal of a place in any year group at any time.

17.2 The way in which admission appeals are dealt with is set out in the School Admission Appeals Code 2012 (Appeals Code). The process is different for appeals against the refusal of a place in a year group to which the statutory maximum class size applies (Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2) compared to appeals against a refusal of a place in other year groups. Parent or Carers should refer to the Appeals Code for further information in this respect.

17.3 Full details of the statutory right of appeal will be set out in the formal letter notifying parents of the refusal of a place, including the deadline for lodging an appeal.

17.4 The School will also publish an appeals timetable for appeals against the refusal of a place in the normal admission round (i.e. to Reception Year in September) alongside this policy on or before 28 February in the year in which offers are made.

18 Deferred Entry and Part-Time Attendance in Reception Year

1.1 All children are entitled to a full-time place in Reception Year in the September following their fourth birthday. Children do not, however, reach compulsory school age (CSA) until one of three prescribed dates following their fifth birthday as follows: Born on or between: Prescribed date the child reaches CSA: 1 September and 31 December 31 December 1 January and 31 March 31 March 1 April and 31 August (known as 'summer') born children' 31 August (one school year later)

18.2 Parents have an absolute right to decide that their child will not start school until they reach CSA, which is known as 'deferred entry' (or 'delayed entry' in the case of 'summer born children' - see below). The School has no discretion to refuse to allow this.

18.3 Where Parents or Carers choose to defer entry until later in the school year, the School will hold their place in Reception Year for them, rather than giving it to another child, for a maximum of two terms (i.e. until the Easter end of term holiday). Places cannot be deferred or retained beyond this point.

18.4 Parents or Carers also have an absolute right to decide that their child will attend school part-time until they reach CSA. In this case, the right can be exercised throughout the school year (i.e. all three terms), and it can also be combined with the right to defer. For example, a child born on 5 February could defer starting school until the first day of term after the Christmas and New Year break, and then attend part-time until the Easter break.

18.5 Where Parents or Carers want to defer their child's entry and/or choose for them to attend school part-time, they should apply for a place in the normal way and, once they have accepted the offer of a place, notify the School of their decision, preferably in writing. There is no need to give reasons.

19 Delayed Entry for Summer Born Children

19.1 Children born between 1 April and 31 August (known as 'summer born children') do not reach CSA until 31 August, and are therefore not legally required to start school until one school year after they became entitled to a full-time place in Reception Year.

19.2 Parents or Carers of summer born children can defer their child's place for one or two terms and/or choose for their child to attend part-time throughout that school year, as set out above. However, they cannot defer their child's place for a whole school year and still retain it. If they do not want their child to start school at all until the following year (i.e. delay their entry), they will need to refuse the offer of a place and apply for admission again the next year.

19.3 However, where a summer born child is admitted one school year later than usual, by default this would be to Year 1 with their normal age group. This means a) they will have missed Reception Year entirely, and b) they will only achieve an offer of a place if there is one available in Year 1 at that time, which is uncommon.

19.4 Parents or Carers can, however, make a request for their child to be admitted one year later than usual, outside their normal age group, to Reception Year. The procedure for making these requests is set out further below, however Parents or Carers should note that, unlike with deferred/delayed entry and part-time attendance, they do not have a absolute right to decide that their child will be

admitted outside their normal age group - this is at the discretion of the Admission Authority for the school involved.

19.5 Parents or Carers are strongly encouraged to make their requests in a timely manner, ideally well ahead of any application deadlines, so that they can obtain a decision in principle which will enable them to make informed decisions on school preferences when they subsequently apply for admission.

19.6 A copy of the actual guidance note can be found on the Department for Education's website at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education.

20 Review and determination of the School's admission arrangements

2.1 The term 'admission arrangements' means "The overall procedure, practices and oversubscription criteria used in deciding the allocation of school places including any device or means used to determine whether a school place is to be offered". The admission arrangements therefore include not only this policy, but all other admission related documents and any other published information about the School's admission processes.

20.2 Under the Code, the Admission Authority for a school must formally determine the admission arrangements for the next intake at that school every year on or before 28 February. Where no changes (other than changing dates/deadlines) are proposed, there is no need to consult. Where changes are proposed (other than a proposed increase in PAN), the Admission Authority must carry out a 6 week statutory consultation in accordance with the Code between 1 October and 31 January ahead of determination of the admission arrangements. Where no changes have been proposed in the intervening period, the Admission Authority must consult on the admission arrangements every 7 years.

20.3 Once determined on or before 28 February, the School's admission arrangements for that intake must be published and a copy provided to their Local Authority. Determined admission arrangements cannot be varied except in limited circumstances to correct a mistake or give effect to a decision of a Schools Adjudicator. All other variations will require Secretary of State consent, which will only be granted where there has been a 'major change in circumstances'.