

CROSSHALL INFANT SCHOOL ACADEMY TRUST

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2023-2024

INTRODUCTION

The Governing Body of the Academy Trust is the admission authority for Crosshall Infant School ("the School"). This means that it is the Governing Body that sets and applies the Admissions Policy for the School. All decisions regarding the admission of children into the School are made by a sub-committee of the Governing Body.

In determining the Admissions Policy, the School complies with current legislation. The Department for Education's School Admissions Code 2014 states no school providing education for children up to the age of seven-years-old should exceed class sizes of 30 children.

The School is approved by the Secretary of State for Education to admit up to a certain maximum number of children in each of the three year groups: Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. This figure is set at 120 children per year group, (a year group is then divided into four classes with each class having a maximum of 30 children).

The School has had occasions when it has been unable to offer places to all parents wishing their child to attend the School. It is unfortunate when this occurs, but the School has a set limit beyond which it cannot function efficiently, pupil/teacher ratios will become unacceptable and the School may not comply with various health and safety, etc. regulations. In order to allocate places on a fair basis to all, we have formalised the admissions procedure and clearly defined the method of prioritising in the event of oversubscription.

The School places no constraints on who may apply for entrance to the School and all applications will be considered and processed in accordance with the guidelines in this document. Children will be admitted without reference to ability or aptitude.

This document sets out to clearly state the following regarding admission to Crosshall Infant School Academy Trust:-

- Admission criteria in the event of over-subscription.
- The method of applying and the way in which the application will be handled.

1. DEFINITIONS

Throughout this document the following definitions apply:

"Parent" is defined as the parent/s or guardian/s of the child.

"Siblings" is defined as brothers or sisters, including step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address.

"Looked After Children" is defined as children who are a) in the care of the local authority or b) are being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of their social services functions.

"Home Address" is to be taken as the address of the adult/s with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives. The home address is that which applies at the time of application. Where children spend time with parents at more than one address, the address used to allocate a school place will be the one at which the pupil is ordinarily resident. Where children spend equal time with both parents, the address used will be the one most advantageous to the application. Changes of address occurring shortly after application can normally be taken into account if notified in writing to the LA Admissions Team or the School. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of intended future changes of address, unless house moves have been confirmed through the exchange of contracts or the signing of a formal lease agreement. A temporary address will only be used for allocation purposes where no permanent address is available.

"Compulsory school age" is defined as the age at which a child must start school - when a child reaches the age of five they must start school in the term following their fifth birthday (unless a child is educated otherwise). Compulsory school age ceases on the last Friday in June in the school year in which the child reaches the age of 16.

"the LA" is the Admissions Team at the local authority, i.e. Cambridgeshire County Council.

2. ADMISSION CRITERIA FOR RECEPTION YEAR - SEPTEMBER INTAKE

In order to qualify for entry into a Reception class, children must have reached the age of four by the 31st August in that year.

3. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

The application process for admissions into Reception Year, (the initial year of entry), is co-ordinated by the LA, which acts on behalf of the Governing Body to

offer places at the school. Parents should apply online at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/admissions or submit a paper form (which is available to download from the LA's website or from the School) no later than the national closing date. Offer letters will be issued by the LA on the published offer date.

Late applications, (those submitted after the national closing date), will also be handled by the LA.

Parents wishing to visit the School prior to submitting an application are welcome to do so, though it may not always be possible to organise this at short notice. Visits are not interviews and do not affect any decision regarding the availability of a place. No interviews are held as part of the admissions process.

All parents are advised to read the LA's guidance for parents on primary admissions before submitting an application.

4. PRIORITY CRITERIA

When the School is oversubscribed, after the admission of children with an Education Health and Care Plan where the School is named in the Plan, priority will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in order:

(NB Those children with an Education Health and Care Plan that does not name the School will be referred to the Student Assessment and Resources Team to determine an appropriate place.)

4.1 FIRST PRIORITY

Looked After Children or children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order.

Children who appear to the Admission Authority to have been in state care (i.e. in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society) outside of England but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted only.

4.2 SECOND PRIORITY

Children who have a sibling at Crosshall Infant School or Crosshall Junior School at the date of admission.

4.3 THIRD PRIORITY

Children of staff where the member of staff has been employed by Crosshall Infant School Academy Trust, or by Crosshall Junior School Academy Trust, for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made.

4.4 FOURTH PRIORITY

Children who have attended Crosshall Nursery School and who were in receipt of at least 15-hours Early Years Funding.

4.5 FIFTH PRIORITY

All other children.

In the event that there are more children in any category than there are places available, places will be prioritised and awarded to children who live nearest the School.

In cases of equal merit, priority will go to children living nearest the School as measured by a straight line. The distance, for admissions purposes, is measured using the straight line distance from the reference point of the home to the reference point of the school both as determined by the Ordnance Survey(OS) AddressBase Premium TM. These distances are produced by the LA for the School. For families who live outside the area covered by the Cambridgeshire mapping system, distances are determined using a combination of local maps and online resources.

In the event of (a) two or more children living at the same address point (eg children resident in a block of flats) or (b) two addresses measuring the same distance from the School, the ultimate tiebreaker will be random selection, witnessed by the Council Officer, independent of the Admissions Team.

5. OVERSUBSCRIPTION

For admission into Reception Year - September intake, the LA, on behalf of the Governing Body, will offer 120 places to children. This is the Published Admission Number (PAN) for that year group. In the event that more than 120 applications are received, the oversubscription criteria will be applied to determine priority for places. All school preferences, (as declared by parents on the LA application form), are treated equally, regardless of whether they are first, second or third preferences.

When an application is refused, the child's details are automatically placed on a reserve list for the year group, ranked according to the admission criteria.

As part of the co-ordinated scheme for primary admissions, the LA will maintain a reserve list on behalf of the Governing Body, ranked according to the School's oversubscription criteria. The reserve list will be held until the end of the Autumn term. Parents should contact the LA if they wish to remain on the reserve list beyond the end of the Autumn term. Parents will be contacted immediately if a place becomes available for their child, but should be aware that their child's place on a reserve list may change if an application is subsequently received that meets a higher criterion than their own.

6. IN-YEAR ADMISSIONS

Applications for a school place after the start of the school year, or for any other year group, are processed by the LA. Parents should complete either an application online via the LA website or an In-Year application form, which is available from the School website, the School office or the LA. This form should be returned to the School office or the LA and parents will be informed of the availability of a school place.

Parents are encouraged to arrange a visit prior to making an application.

If a place at Crosshall Infant School is offered, parents are asked to contact the School again so that the relevant paperwork may be completed, and both a visit to the child's new class and a start date can be agreed.

Where the School is unable to offer a place, the child's details will be held by the LA on a reserve list. Parents should be aware that their child's place on a reserve list may change if an application is subsequently received that meets a higher criterion than their own.

7. GENERAL INFORMATION

7.1 ALLOCATION TO ALTERNATIVE YEAR GROUP

If there is no place available for a child's year group, the School will not allocate a place in another year group. This has been tried in the past and is not in the best interests of the child or other children in the class.

7.2 REQUESTS TO TRANSFER SCHOOLS

The School will always discourage parents wishing to transfer a child from another local school as a result of a dispute with that school and will always

request that the matter be discussed with the Headteacher of the child's school. It is better to address the problem and seek a solution rather than transfer schools.

7.3 ETHNIC ORIGIN

It is the School's policy that children of all ethnic backgrounds shall have equal consideration relating to all aspects of the running of the School, including admissions.

7.4 FREE SCHOOL TRANSPORT

For the purpose of providing assistance with home-to-school transport, the LA has a defined catchment area for the School, although the School does not use a defined catchment area for the admission process. Any child living within the LA-defined area, but more than two miles from the School, is entitled to assistance with transport. For further information, contact the LA.

7.5 STARTING SCHOOL

Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the School is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year;

Parents can request that their child attend part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.

If parents wish to take up this option, we request they make an appointment with the Headteacher.

8. INFANT CLASS SIZE APPEAL PANEL

In 1998 the School Standards and Framework Act was passed which changed the legislation relating to infant class sizes. It is no longer permitted to exceed 30 children in an infant class with only one qualified teacher.

If you are not offered a place at a school because of the infant class size rule, you will be offered the opportunity to have an independent appeal panel look at the decision made by the admission authority.

The panel is made up of three people who are independent of the Governing Body and the Local Authority. They will take into consideration all the circumstances of the case put before them. Any decision they make is binding on the Local Authority, school and the parents concerned.

The appeal panel can only overturn the decision to refuse a place if you are able to show that:

- The child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had been properly implemented; or
- The child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had not been contrary to mandatory provisions in the School Admissions Code and the School Standards Framework Act (SSFA) 1998; or
- The decision to refuse a place was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case;

Very few infant class size appeals are successful.

Appeals for the School are currently arranged by the LA on behalf of the Governing Body. Further information and appeal forms are available from the LA, or from the Cambridgeshire County Council website, www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/admissions

9. CROSSHALL JUNIOR SCHOOL

Crosshall Infant School and Crosshall Junior School operate as separate schools on a shared site. There is however much close co-operation between the two schools. The offer of a place at the Infant School does **NOT** imply any priority places at the Junior School for older brothers or sisters. Their placement must be dealt with directly with the Junior School.

The offer of a place at the Infant School does not guarantee that a place in the Junior School at the end of Year 2 will be given.

10. FURTHER INFORMATION

All parents are advised to read the LA guidance booklet for parents on primary admissions.

For further information please contact either:

the LA Admissions Team

Tel: 0345 045 1370

E-mail: admissions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

or,

Mrs Kirsty Digby, School Admissions Secretary

Tel: 01480 475980 (Main School Office)

E-mail: info@crosshallinfant.co.uk