

Admissions: Statement of Principles

This document is informed by:

Fair Access Protocols Guidance (August 2021), School Admissions Code 2021 ('the Code') issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ('SSFA 1998').

Document Control

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Principles:

Meridian Trust operates a fully comprehensive, non-selective admissions policy open to students of all abilities, all religious faiths and those of no faith in accordance with the School Admissions Code (2021) ('the Code') issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ('SSFA 1998'). The purpose of the Code is to ensure that all school places for maintained schools (excluding maintained special schools) and Academies are allocated and offered in an open and fair way.

All places at Meridian Trust academies are free and available to the local community within an admissions policy specific to each academy that mirrors the admissions procedures under the Code and in accordance with the stated vision and values of Meridian Trust.

Our Vision: High-quality educational provision for all at the heart of local communities

Our Mission: To deliver, promote and inspire high quality educational provision in schools at the heart of their local communities so that:

- Young people become successful learners and confident, empowered individuals;
- Schooling experiences are based on valuing individuals; young people are encouraged to think for themselves and act for other; equipping them with the values, attributes,

knowledge and skills to make a rewarding contribution to society as adults, in and out of work;

- Every school is a hub for community activities, a centre for extended services and a source of immense pride for students, their families and other local stakeholders;
- Our staff benefit from strong networks, excellent career opportunities and a human approach where they are equally valued and supported
- Well-run schools retain and develop their contextual identity, while contributing to our common values, practices, curriculum approaches and operational systems. (see appendix for enactment of values)

These principles are supported by each academy, in addition each academy determines a local admissions policy which is approved by the Academy Council in line with the code and local (authority) arrangements for allocation of places.

Over-subscription Criteria:

In line with Admissions Code, all mainstream academies **must** have as over-subscription criteria:

1. SEND:

The Academy will admit children with a statement of special educational needs or disabilities which names X as the appropriate school for the child and where we have agreed that we can meet the needs of the child

2. Looked after children and all previously looked after children (definition below)

It is important that Meridian Academies have over-subscription criteria that are established to best service the local area and co-ordinate with other local providers. Academy Councils can choose to include and where in the over-subscription hierarchy the following might appear:

3. Children of all members of staff at the Academy provided that they have been employed for a minimum of two years and/or are recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage.

4. Children living in the catchment area who would be in receipt of the Service Premium. (The service premium is additional funding paid annually to schools under section 14 of the Education Act 2002 for the purposes of supporting the pastoral needs of the children of Armed Services personnel.) (see further definition below)

Meridian academies exist in a range of contexts. The relative position in over-subscription criteria of siblings, living within catchment or attending "catchment" primary are best understood and monitored at a local level. Trustees reserve the right to question or change local decisions - but this should be by exception.

Definitions

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

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

This includes 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.

Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces) and Crown Servants: For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, the School Admissions team will: a) allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area (as long as one is available), provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. Admission authorities (i.e. bodies such as the local authority (NNC), academy trusts and governing bodies of schools) must not refuse to process an application and must not refuse a place solely because the family do not yet have an intended address, or do not yet live in the area. b) use the address at which the child will live when applying their oversubscription criteria, as long as the parents provide some evidence of their intended address. Admission authorities must use a Unit or quartering address as the child's home address when considering the application against their oversubscription criteria, where a parent requests this.'

Siblings: A sibling is defined as a child's brother or sister. A sibling must be living at the same permanent address and as part of the same family unit (one or two parents plus children) to qualify under this criterion. For School Admissions purposes, the term sibling includes:

- half-brothers and half-sisters
- step-brothers and step-sisters
- adopted children
- children in foster care
- children living in the same family unit, even if they are not biological brothers and sisters – for example when the parents are not married/in a civil relationship.
- Cousins are not regarded as siblings.

Home Address (child's): The child's home address is defined as the address at which the child normally resides with their parent/carer on the closing date for applications.

When we refer to a child's home address, we mean the permanent residence of the child. This address should be the child's only or main residence which is;

- owned by the child's parent(s)/carer(s) or
- leased to or rented by the child's parent(s)/carer(s) under a lease or written rental agreement of not less than six months' duration.

When parents live separately and the child spends time with each parent, the home address will be treated as the place where the child sleeps for most of the school week (i.e. Sunday night – Thursday night inclusive).

If the child spends equal amounts of time at two addresses, the parents must agree which address they wish to be the child's main address.

Documentary evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property concerned.

Distance Measurements: Distances are measured on a straight-line basis from the address point of the child's home to the address point of the school, using a geographical information system. Each address has a unique address point established by the most valuable elements from the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NPLG), Ordnance Survey Master Map, Royal Mail Postal Address File and The Valuation Office Agency. The address point for a property does not change.

Multiple Birth Groups: In the case of twins or other siblings from a multiple birth, if the last child to be admitted is from a multiple birth group, the other children in the group will also be offered places, even if it means exceeding the Published Admission number.

In the case of siblings (see definition above) in the same year group, where there is only one place remaining which is to be offered to one sibling, the other too will be offered a place.

Useful Statements:

- **Allocation to PAN:** If the admission number is exceeded within any criterion, priority will be given to those who live closest to the school (see Distance Measurements for information on how distances are measured)
- **Tie-breaker:** If two or more applications cannot otherwise be separated and there is only one place available, a random allocation process will be used to determine who should be allocated the place.


As our most recently opened academy, the Weldon Village academy policy reflects current best practice.






Post 16:

All Meridian Post 16 Centres will have a clear statement regarding admission criteria and how over-subscription will be managed. Priority may be given to students who have completed their pre-16 education at the academy.

Appendix A

The enactment of our values...



	Young people...	Staff...	Parents/Carers...	Communities...
 <small>Valuing People</small>	<p>Safe Responsible Nurtured Known</p>	<p>Engaged Developed Supported Consulted</p>	<p>Welcome Involved Informed Listened to</p>	<p>Proud Integrated Accessible Partners</p>
 <small>High Quality Learning Environment</small>	<p>Challenging lessons, inspiring content, curious learners, supported to achieve.</p>	<p>Experts who strive for continual development. Collaborative networks, trusted to deliver.</p>	<p>Well informed about curriculum, assessment and progress. Equipped to support their child.</p>	<p>Schools reflect a community served and its ambitions for the next generation.</p>
 <small>Pursuit of Excellence</small>	<p>A belief in the potential of every child to excel. A culture that expects and celebrates success.</p>	<p>Set ambitious goals and model what success looks like. Eager to improve.</p>	<p>Support the school to deliver the best. Facilitating participation, ensuring attendance.</p>	<p>Contribute their expertise, advice, wisdom and facilities to enrich the school.</p>
 <small>Extending the Boundaries of Learning</small>	<p>Developing the whole child through rich opportunities, experiences, rewards.</p>	<p>Make connections, provide opportunities. Generous and sharing of knowledge and expertise.</p>	<p>View the school as a place where their child is known, supported and challenged to succeed.</p>	<p>View the school is a training ground for a rich contribution to society and community.</p>
 <small>Achievement for all</small>	<p>Everyone able to secure the very best possible outcomes from their different starting points.</p>	<p>Are accountable for the outcomes we contribute towards and strive for the very best.</p>	<p>Understand, support and contribute to the aims and targets set for each child.</p>	<p>Have confidence that every child in the community can thrive in our schools.</p>