

ADMISSIONS POLICY for 2025/26

Birchen Coppice Primary Academies

Birchen Coppice Primary Academy has a PAN of 30 children, plus nursery offering 30 hours' childcare, full and part-time nursery places for three-year-olds (please note this is a separate admissions process).

Victoria Academies Trust is the admissions authority, but we work closely with the Local Authority in admitting children to the Academies.

The Local Authority (LA) website contains all of the information that you need to apply for a place (http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20099/school_admissions), as well as other key information. If you have any further questions, then please contact the relevant school office.

On the following pages of our policy, you will find further information on the specific criteria and details of admissions into Birchen Coppice Primary Academy.

Admissions – Further Information

When there are more applications than places children are admitted in the following order of priority:

- i) Relevant *'Looked after' and previously *'Looked after' children.
- ii) Siblings (see below for definition) of pupils attending the Academy **and** living within the **catchment** area of the school. In order to qualify for a place on the grounds of a sibling attending the school, the sibling must already be attending the school at the time of application and still be attending at the time of admission. Copies of catchment area maps, if required are available from the LA, or can be viewed in schools.

In the event of a school catchment area change being approved, pupils who would still have a **sibling connection** (see below for definition) at the time of admission and who are living at the same address in the previous catchment area for a school, (but not within the revised catchment area), at the time the change was approved will be considered as living within the **catchment area**.

- iii) Pupils living outside of the catchment area but who would still have a **sibling connection** (see below for definition) at the Academy at the time of admission. In order to qualify for a place on the grounds of a sibling attending the school, the sibling must already be attending the school at the time of application and still be attending at the time of admission.
- iv) Pupils living within the **catchment** area of the school. Copies of catchment area maps, if required are available from the LA, or can be viewed in schools.
- v) Children of all staff at the mainstream school, where that member of staff has been employed for two or more years, and/or is recruited to fill a post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

- vi) Pupils who live **nearest** to the school by the shortest straight-line distance. The measurement will be taken using the Geocode Points for each property and the GeoCode point for the School. The 'LA uses a software package called Arcview GIS to determine distance. Ordnance Survey supplies the co-ordinates that are used to plot an address within this system. ***(In the event of equidistance applicants, any place will be allocated by random selection (lottery). Someone totally independent of the two Academies will supervise this process on behalf of Victoria Academies Trust).***

In accordance with legislation, a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be offered a place at the school named in the Plan.

“looked after child” has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child who is (a) in the care of the local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (eg children with foster parents) at the time of making the application to the school. A “previously looked after child” is a child who immediately moved on from that status after becoming subject to an adoption, child arrangement order or special guardianship order and includes those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

Where there are too many applications from within the catchment area, priority will be decided in the following order, i.e. sibling connection then children of staff then according to distance, each assessed as indicated above.

The sibling connection, as well as brother and sister will include half-siblings, adopted children, step-siblings or a child of the parent/carers partner. They must also be living at the same home address. Children who are brought together as a family by civil partnership and who are living at the same address, are also considered to be siblings.

In the event that one or more but not all children from a multiple birth can be allocated a place(s), all of the children from that multiple birth will be admitted even if this takes the school over PAN. These children are exceptions to the Infant Class Size legislation.

There are a number of additional limited exceptions to the Infant Class Size legislation, including children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round, children with statements of special educational needs, ‘Looked after’ children, children with special educational needs who are normally taught in a unit attached to the school, where a procedural error has occurred, children admitted following successful appeal and children admitted outside of the normal admissions round where no other place is available.

Late Applications

The Trust has decided to accept late applications and treat them as being on time, only in the following circumstances;

- a) where a family have just moved address;
- b) where it is agreed by the Headteacher, that individual circumstances apply and the delay was reasonable given the circumstances of the case.

In each case supporting documentary evidence will be required. **In all other circumstances, or if the application is not received until after the date set out in the scheme, late**

applications will receive a lower priority, and will only be considered after the applications received (or deemed to be) on time.

Waiting Lists

Waiting lists for our Academy are maintained by our office admissions member of staff at each of our academies. These waiting lists will be maintained until 31 December. At that stage parents will need to reapply at the start of the following term if they wish to be included.

Fair Access Protocol

As part of the new Worcestershire Fair Access Protocol, incorporating the 'Hard to Place Protocol', all schools with Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 classes can be required to exceed the published admission number to admit pupils covered by the Protocol.

'In Year' transfer arrangements

The academy takes part in the Local Authority in-year co-ordinated scheme.

https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/download/1330/coordinated_schemes_for_all_worcestershire_schools

All appeals will be managed by Sandwell LA

Parents have the right to appeal against the Academies decision to refuse an admission. Appeals will run in conjunction with the Sandwell LA appeals process, which can be found at:

http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200303/school_admissions/2054/pupil_admissions_appeal

Admission of Children outside of their normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health, effectively in the year group below or above their chronological age group. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to Reception rather than Year 1.

The Academy Trust will request the Head Teacher of the school to reach the final decision. This will involve the Head completing an educational assessment to determine whether or not it is appropriate for the individual child to delay or accelerate their entry into school and be taught outside of their chronological age group.

Summer Born Children

Usually children with a date of birth in the summer term wishing to start school in the September after their fifth birthday would start in Year 1 and consequently miss the entire reception year. Please be aware that there may not be a vacancy in Year 1 at that time. Parents can also request that their child enter the reception class in the September after

their fifth birthday, effectively in the year group below their chronological age group. The admissions authority of the school must make the decision based on the circumstances of each case. This will involve the head completing an educational assessment to determine whether or not it is appropriate for the individual child to delay their entry into school and be taught permanently behind their chronological age group. This process must be completed in advance of the closing date, in the event that the delayed entry is not approved, parents will need to make application in time for the Reception Class intake. Should the delayed entry be approved you will be advised how to proceed at that stage. Even if it is agreed that your summer born child can start school in the September following their fifth birthday in the reception class, the normal admission arrangements apply and there is no guarantee of a place. You should therefore give careful consideration to requesting delayed entry.

Deferred Entry

Parents may request that their child's entry to a reception class be deferred until later in the same reception academic year group. Parents cannot defer entry until the following academic year. Parents wishing to consider a deferment should discuss the situation with the head teacher at the school. Parents must apply for a school place in the normal way at the usual time. By law children must start school at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday.

Agreed and adopted by Academy Councillors on:

Birchen Coppice Academy *Andrew Owen*

Date *17/07/24*

Chair of Trust Board *As Above*

Date _____

Headteacher *S. Penry*