

St Columb Minor International Academy

ADMISSIONS POLICY (from SEPTEMBER 2013)

REVISED & APPROVED BY THE ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE
November 2011

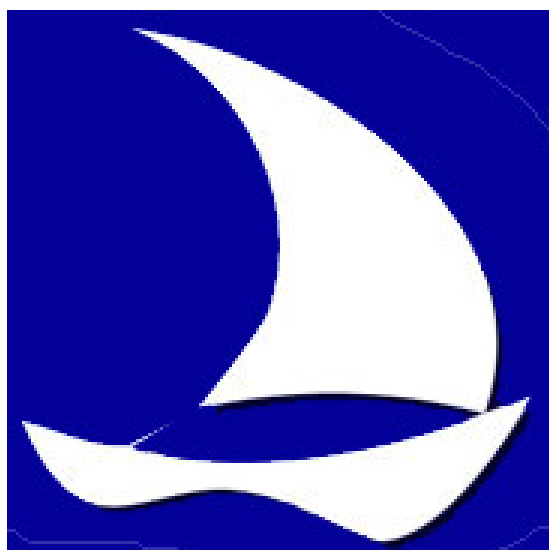


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1. INTRODUCTION

The Governing Body of the Academy Trust is the Admission Authority for the Academy. This means that it is the Governing Body that sets and applies the Admissions Policy for the Academy. All decisions regarding the admission of children into the Academy are made by a committee of the Governing Body. In determining the Admissions Policy the Academy complies with current legislation.

There is a Statutory Code of Practice on School Admissions set out by the Department for Education (DFE) under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 that states no school providing education for children up to the age of seven-years-old should exceed class sizes of 30 children. St Columb Minor Academy ("the Academy") 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 70 children per year group from September 2013. A year group is then divided into three classes with each class having a maximum of 30 children. The Academy has, in the past, had several occasions when we have been unable to offer places to all parents wishing their child to attend the Academy. It is unfortunate when this occurs, but the Academy has a set limit beyond which it cannot function efficiently; pupil/teacher ratios will become unacceptable and the Academy may not comply with various health and safety, 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 over subscription.

In writing this policy we have taken into account the proposed draft of the DfE's Admission Code which is due to come into effect in 2012. Therefore, our policy arrangements are subject to the draft Code on which DfE consulted in 2011 coming into force'.

The Academy places no constraints on who may apply for entrance to the Academy 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 St Columb Minor Academy:-

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

1.1. DEFINITIONS Throughout this document the following definitions apply:

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

"Brother or Sister" is defined as children aged 4 to 16, living in the same family unit. They are defined as children with at least one natural or adoptive parent in common, living at the same or a different address. Children living in the same household at the same address where their parents are married or live as partners would be counted as siblings, regardless of their actual relationship to each other.

"Looked After Children" is defined as children who are in the care of a Local Authority under a court order or accommodated under Children Act 1989

"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 where the parent receives child benefit for the child and/or the child is resident for at least 3 nights per school week. Changes of address occurring shortly after application, but before offer of places, 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 he/she must start school in the term following his

or her 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.

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 Cornwall Local Authority (LA), which acts on behalf of the Governing Body to offer places at the Academy. Parents should apply online at www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions or submit a Cornwall Application Form available from the Academy or from the LA Admissions Team, 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 Admissions Team.

Parents wishing to visit the Academy prior to submitting an application are welcome to do so. 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 booklet for parents on primary admissions before submitting an application.

4. PRIORITY CRITERIA

Children who have a statement of special educational needs that names the Academy must be admitted. NB. Those children with a statement of special educational needs that does not name the Academy will be referred to Individual Needs Team at Cornwall Council to determine an appropriate place.

For all other children the following priority order will be used to decide which children should occupy any vacant places in the Reception Year at the Academy for each school year.

4.1. FIRST PRIORITY

Children in Care, also known as Looked After children (LAC). The DfE's proposed draft Admission Code extends this to children who were looked after, but immediately after being looked after became subject to a Residence Order, Special Guardianship order or Adoption Order.

4.2. SECOND PRIORITY

Children who have a brother or sister, (as defined earlier in the policy), at St Columb Minor Academy, at the date of admission.

4.3. THIRD 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. The distance, for admissions purposes, is measured using the straight line measurement from the centre point of the main building of the home to the centre point of the main gate of the school as determined by the Geographical Information System selected by the Academy. For families who live outside the area covered by the mapping system, distances are determined using a combination of local maps and on-line resources.

Whilst we are committed to complying with parental preference in respect of parents living within and outside the local area, if you are planning to move into the local area, your application for a place for your child will not be given the priority accorded to local area children without firm evidence of your new address and moving date, such as a copy of a signed and dated tenancy agreement or confirmation that contracts have been exchanged and a completion date agreed.

A child's attendance at the First Steps Pre-school does not guarantee that child a place in the school.

5. OVERSUBSCRIPTION

For admission into Reception Year - September intake, the LA, on behalf of the Governing Body, will offer 70 places to children. This is the Published Admission Number (PAN) for that year group. In the event that more than 70 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 Admissions Team 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 Admission Team 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 or is subject to a successful Admissions Appeal.

If any of the criteria above leave more children with an equal claim than places available, the following tie-breakers will be used:

- a) Where two or more children fulfil the same criterion, priority will be given to those children for whom the Academy is their nearest school and are in receipt

of Free School Meals. If this does not determine the difference between two children then 'random allocation' will be used. Random allocation would be supervised by someone independent to the school i.e. local councillor.

6. IN YEAR ADMISSIONS

Applications for a pupil place after the start of the school year, or for any other year group, are processed by the Academy, who may be contacted by telephone 01637 873958 or by email: secretary@st-columb-minor.cornwall.sch.uk.

An application form must be completed and returned to the Academy. We will then write to parents to confirm that a place is to be offered. Parents are encouraged to contact the Academy in order to arrange a visit prior to making an application. If a place at St Columb Minor Academy is offered, parents are asked to contact the Academy 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 Academy is unable to meet the preferences expressed the parents will be referred to the local authority for further advice on places available in other schools.

In this situation the child's details will be held on a reserve list by the Academy for a minimum period of one term following the unsuccessful application.

7. GENERAL INFORMATION

7.1. ALLOCATION TO ALTERNATIVE YEAR GROUP

If there is no place available in a child's year group, the Academy will not allocate a place in another year group. This is not considered to be in the best interests of the child or other children in the class.

7.2. REQUESTS TO TRANSFER SCHOOLS

The Academy 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 is 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. SINGLE SCHOOL EQUALITY SCHEME

It is the Academy's policy that families of all backgrounds shall have equal consideration relating to all aspects of the running of the Academy - including admissions. Our arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, any one involved in the process from a particular social or racial group, religion or belief, sex or a child with a disability or special educational needs.

7.4 FREE SCHOOL TRANSPORT

For the purpose of providing assistance with home to school transport, the LA has a defined catchment area (or designated area) for the Academy, although the Academy

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 Academy, is entitled to assistance with transport. For further information, contact the LA Admissions Team.

7.5 STARTING SCHOOL

Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the Academy 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 either of these options we request they make an appointment with the Headteacher.

8. APPEALS

If you are not offered a place at our Academy you have the right to appeal to an independent panel and should contact the Academy for the relevant papers if they are not available from the LA . Please ensure that the Academy rather than the LA Admission Appeal Form is used.

9. 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 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.

Under the revised draft School Admissions Code, November 2011, additional children may be admitted under very limited exceptional circumstances. These children remain as 'excepted' pupils for the time that they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The 'excepted' children are:

- Children with statements of special educational needs admitted outside the normal admission round;
- Looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admission round;
- Children admitted, after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admission authority or local authority in the original application process;
- Children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal;
- Children who move into the area outside of the normal admission round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance;
- Children of UK service personnel admitted outside of the normal admission round;
- Twins and children from multiple births when one of the siblings is the 30th child admitted;
- Children with SEN who are registered at a Special School, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school.

9. CHILDREN OF UK SERVICE PERSONNEL (UK ARMED FORCES)

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting to the Newquay area, the academy will:

- allocate a place in advance, if accompanied by an official government letter which declares a relocation date and a Unit postal address or quartering area address for considering the application against our over subscription criteria. This includes accepting a Unit postal address or quartering area address for a service child;
- ensure that arrangements support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for service children

10. FIRST STEPS PRE-SCHOOL

First Steps Pre-School and St Columb Minor Academy operate on a shared site and there is close co-operation between the two providers. However, the offer of a place at the Pre-School does **NOT** guarantee that a place in the Academy will be given nor does it imply any priority places at the Academy for older brothers or sisters. Each placement must be dealt with directly with the Academy.

11. CHILDREN FROM OVERSEAS

The academy treats application for children from overseas in accordance with European Law or Home Office rules for non-European Economic Area nationals.

12. FURTHER INFORMATION

All parents are advised to read the LA booklet for parents on primary admissions. For further information please contact either:

- the LA Admissions Team Tel: 03001234101

E-mail: admissionsandtransport@cornwall.gov.uk

Or

- Mrs Michelle Smith, School Admissions and Induction Tutor Tel: 01637 873958
(School Office)
E-mail: secretary@st-columb-minor.cornwall.sch.uk