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| Author/Contact | N Buglass Tel: 0117 379 0119 Email: info@educatetogether.org.uk | |
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Mulberry Park Educate Together Admission Arrangements

Introductory statement

An Educate Together school is committed to the principle of equality of access, irrespective of social, cultural or religious background. Educate Together is its' own Admissions Authority and will coordinate all in-year admissions, however, will follow the School Admissions Code 2021 and have regard to the guidance, timelines and procedures as set out by Bath and North East Somerset Council (BANES) who will retain a coordinating role for all initial admissions into Reception.

Age of admission

Children can start school full-time in the September after they turn 4 years old.

In exceptional circumstances it may be agreed for a child to have a part time timetable until they reach compulsory school age, which is the term after they turn 5 years old. Parents/ carers should contact the Headteacher to discuss this on an individual basis.

Making an application

If parents or carers wish to apply for a Reception place at the school, they must apply using the admission form that is available on the Bath and North East Somerset Council website. Opportunities to visit the school are available throughout the Autumn term, and parents/ carers are encouraged to attend wherever possible in order to make informed decisions.

To make an application for any other year group or time of the year, please contact the school office for an application form.

Date for admissions, offers of places and confirmation of a place

The timelines for applications for places in the reception classes are published each year on the Bath and North East Somerset Council website, with the deadline usually being the middle of January for the following September. It is important the application is done before the cut-off date for your child to be considered within the

first round. Applications received after the cut-off date will only be processed once the first round of offers are made.

First offers of places will be made by email and post by mid-April each year. Parents/carers will be required to confirm acceptance by the beginning of May. Failure to confirm acceptance of a place may result in that offer being forfeit and the place being offered to another child. It is important that parents/carers ensure that the school has up-to-date contact details at all times.

Management of the applications list for in-year entries

In-Year applications should be made directly to the school, who will allocate places using the over subscription criteria detailed in this policy when required. On receipt of the application form, the school office will verify the child's identity (e.g. birth certificate, passport) and contact the previous school. They will then check if a place is available in the relevant year group. Where a place is available the child will be offered the place, and if not, we will place the child's name on the waiting list. This list will be maintained, in confidence, by the school office. This list may be forwarded to Educate Together Academy Trust and Bath and North East Somerset Council for the coordination of school admissions and the compilation of summary reports to guide policy. In all other cases, an applicant's details will only be available to the applicant, the school office and where legally required by an official body.

Admission Number

The school has an admission number of 30 for entry in reception year. The school will accordingly admit this number of pupils each year if there are sufficient applications. Where fewer applicants than the published admission number(s) for the relevant year group are received, the Academy Trust will offer places at the school to all those who have applied.

Oversubscription criteria

Where Mulberry Park Educate Together is named in a child's Education, Health and Care Plan the school is legally required to admit the child to the school. These places take priority and will be allocated before the oversubscription criteria are applied.

If an Educate Together School is undersubscribed any parent that applies will be offered a place.

If there are more applications than places, the following criteria set out below, in priority order will apply:

1. Children in care (i.e. children who are in the care of local authorities as defined by Section 22 of the Children Act 1989). This definition will also include 'previously looked after children'. A previously looked after child is a child who met the above definition but ceased to do so because they were adopted (under the Adoption Act 1976 or Adoption and Children Act 2002) or became the subject of a child arrangement order or special guardianship order¹ (under the Children Act 1989)
2. Children with brothers/sisters attending the school at the time of application who will still be on roll on the date of the proposed admission. Brothers/sisters must live at the same address as the child for whom the application is being made. This includes half, step and foster brothers/sisters who live at the same address.
3. Those living closest to the school as measured in a direct line from the home address to the school.

Home is defined as where the child spends the majority of their time and is living with the person who has parental responsibility.

Where two or more children live in a flat or other multi-home dwelling and it is not possible to determine which applicant lives closest, the available place(s) will be allocated by drawing lots supervised by an independent body.

Twins and Multiple Births

If the last child to be offered a place is a twin or other multiple birth, and their sibling cannot be offered initially, the school will, in these circumstances ensure both twins are offered a place. In the case of triplets or other multiple births, the same policy will apply.

¹ Both within and outside the UK on provision of evidence.

Deferring or Delaying of Admission

A **deferred** school place is usually when a child whose birthday is in the summer, starts school in the Reception class but may start in the January or after Easter rather than the beginning of the school year. Applications for a school place must be completed to the statutory timetables, and a deferred place is not automatic and should be notified to the Headteacher beforehand, so that they are aware. The school completely understands concerns a parent/ carer may have, however the Early Years curriculum is designed around young children and in the vast majority of cases it is in the child's best interests to begin with their peers at the beginning of the school year.

A **delayed** school place is when the child starts school a year later than usual. This could be with them joining their age-related cohort in Year 1 or starting in Reception with children a year younger than them. A decision about delaying a school place will typically be made during the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process for a child with significant additional needs. If your child does not have an EHCP but they are born after the 1st of April (i.e. 'summer born'), the school application should be made in the manner outlined above but with the 'delayed entry' box being ticked. You must submit the form to Bath and North East Somerset Council to the statutory deadlines, but also write to the school outlining the reasons for requesting delayed entry with any supporting evidence.

Whilst there is no statutory barrier to children being admitted to school outside of their chronological year group there is no duty to agree to such a request. When such a request is made, the academy trust will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the views of the headteacher and any supporting evidence provided by the parent/ carer.

Further information from Bath and North East Somerset Council can be found [here](#).

Late Applications

Applications received after the closing date will be treated as late applications unless there is evidence to show that the application or amendment could not reasonably have been made on time.

Late applications will be given a lower priority and will be dealt with after all on time applications in the first round are offered. If the school is oversubscribed, late

applications will be refused and placed on the waiting list in accordance with the admission criteria.

Waiting List

The school will operate a waiting list for each year group. Where in any year the school receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until the end of the academic year. This will be maintained by the Academy Trust and it will be open to any parent/carer to ask for their child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

It is important to note that the waiting list is not on a 'first come, first served' basis. A child's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria and so may change (e.g. if a child is first on the waiting list but a new family moves into the area but closer to the school, they will then be top of the waiting list irrespective of how long they have been waiting). Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

The waiting list will be reordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list.

Appeals

When an Educate Together school refuses an admission application parents will be informed and will be told the reason the application was refused; information about the right to appeal: the deadline for lodging an appeal: the contact details for making an appeal. All applicants refused a school place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. Any appeal should be based on evidence that the school has not followed the Code of Practice or an error has occurred.

Appellants should contact the office at Mulberry Park Educate Together Primary, Mulberry Way, Bath BA2 5BU, for information on how to appeal. Information on the timetable for the appeals process is on our website at www.mulberrypark.org.uk.

Withdrawing an offer

Educate Together will withdraw an offer if it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application. The application will be considered afresh and a right of appeal offered where the application is refused.

A place will not be withdrawn once a child has started unless it has been obtained fraudulently at which point the length of time the child has attended will be taken into consideration.

Exclusions

Educate together may refuse admission to applicants who have been permanently excluded from two or more other schools, where the date of the last exclusion was less than 2 years before the application for admission is made. Educate Together will co-ordinate its arrangements in accordance with Bath and North East Somerset Council Fair Access Protocol.

Tie-break

Where two or more children receive equal admissions priority given the above criteria, random allocation will be used as a tie-break in any criterion to decide who has the highest priority for admission. The process will be independently verified.

Publication of this policy

This policy will be published in full on the school website. It will be readily available from the school office and submitted to the local authority for inclusion in its publications. The school will publicise its existence through continuous engagement with the local community and advertise through traditional media as well as with digital and social media. Where appropriate and practicable, the policy will be made available in different languages to suit local communities.