



Educate Together

**Including Redfield ET Primary, Somerdale ET
Primary, Parklands ET Primary and Mulberry
Park ET Primary**

**Admissions Policy Public Consultation
Report
January 2021**

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Educate
Together

1. Executive Summary of the Consultation Report

1.1 Foreword

The Admissions Code 2014 states that where changes are proposed to admission arrangements, the admission authority must first publicly consult on those arrangements. If no changes are made to admission arrangements, they must be consulted on at least once every 7 years. Consultation must be for a minimum of 6 weeks and must take place between 1 October and 31 January of the school year before those arrangements are to apply.

Educate Together proposed changes to its Admissions Policy at all four schools, as part of a Trust-wide consultation to ensure consistency across all schools.

Schools are:

Redfield Educate Together Primary

Somerdale Educate Together Primary

Parklands Educate Together Primary

Mulberry Park Educate Together Primary

Activities prior, during and following the consultation are detailed in this report. The Policy resulting from this consultation is now finalised and published on the school's website and through the Local Authority.

1.2 Statutory Consultation

1.2.1 As part of the school's obligation to consult on changes to its Admissions Policy, each school undertook a public consultation between the 21st December 2020 and the 31st January 2021. In addition to being required, under the Admissions Code 2014, Educate Together Academy Trust is committed to meaningful engagement with parents, residents and stakeholders at the school. As such, a variety of stakeholders were contacted in a variety of ways, as listed in Appendix A.

2. Introduction to Educate Together Academy Trust

2.1 Binding principles

Educate Together is legally bound to operate by its four binding principles:

Equality-based *i.e. all children having equal rights of access to the school, with children of all social cultural and religious background been equally respected.*

Co-educational *and committed to encouraging all children to explore their full range of abilities and opportunities.*

Learner-centred *in their approach to education.*

Democratically run *with active participation by parents, pupils and the community in the daily life of the school, whilst positively affirming the professional role of the teachers.*

2.2 Ethos: The equality principle

Educate Together schools are committed to the principle that children of all backgrounds should be equal regardless of class or wealth, culture and ethnicity, ability, gender and religious or philosophic viewpoint.

The objective of Educate Together is to create a culture and practice in which the identity of every child is guaranteed active support. Neither the child nor parents or guardians should have to ask for respect to be given and no child or family should feel that they are an outsider. The school works hard to create a positive, comfortable atmosphere.

2.3 The Ethical Education Curriculum

In an Educate Together school a daily period of time is set aside for the ethical education curriculum. This values core of all teaching and learning in the school. A copy of the curriculum is available from the trust and is downloadable from the Educate Together website: www.educatetogether.org.uk

The programme is divided into four strands: *Moral and Spiritual Development, Justice and Equality, Ethics and the Environment* and *Belief Systems*: The Educate Together ethos and it is here that the values that the school seeks to model in its 'characteristic spirit' are articulated and explained in greater depth.

3. The Consultation Timeline: an outline

3.1 Overview of formal consultation process

Stage 1: A Draft Admissions Policy was drawn up by Jeremy Hughes, as a consultant in January 2020. Due to COVID 19, this was not prioritised until later in the academic year, with staff wellbeing and Health and Safety for staff and pupils taking precedence.

The Draft document was confirmed as the base document on the 20th November, by the Education Sub-Committee, Chaired by Kathy Brown. Headteachers and the Executive Head were asked for feedback on this draft, which was delivered to the Sub-Committee on Monday 23rd November.

The Committee considered feedback, sought clarification and made amendments, before the draft was checked for legality by Browne Jacobson.

Stage 2: On Monday 14th December 2020, the Public Consultation went 'Live' with documents available on the school's website and emails sent out to key stakeholders. For a list of Stakeholders and methods of contact please see below.

Stage 3: Public Consultation finished on 24th January 2021. Feedback was the collated and submitted back to the Education Sub-Committee on 25th January 2021.

The Sub-Committee considered all feedback, sought clarification from key personnel and Browne Jacobson before recommending approval of the final policy document to the Board. The Board approved the document on 11th February 2021.

The completion of this consultation and resulting policy were communicated to staff internally on 16th February. The Local Authority received the new policy on the 16th February and websites were updated with the new information and this report on the 18th February 2021.

3.2 Key consultation methods:

3.2.1 Website: a consultation page was launched for the duration of the consultation period. This page included the proposed new policy, a list of changes and contact email and address for feedback, as shown in Appendix B.

3.2.2 Schools email: An email was sent to all surrounding primary schools in the area, in addition to the Local Authority's Admissions Team. This can be found in Appendix C.

3.2.3 Nurseries email: local nurseries and other pre-schools were sent an email with the consultation document and links, asking if they would disseminate amongst the parents at their setting, who will be considering their child's school place within the next two years. A copy of this can be found in Appendix D.

3.2.4 Emailed letter to parents: existing parents at the schools were sent an email or app message (depending on the schools agreed comms methods) with a letter attachment, explaining the changes proposed along with a copy of the new policy and directions for how to comment. Hard copies were made available at the main office, upon request. A copy of the letter can be found in Appendix E.

3.2.5 An email with consultation documents sent to the Local Governing Board and staff for their feedback. Initial plans were to include this feedback in Stage One, of the consultation, prior to public feedback but pressures of workload created through lockdown measures made this unfeasible, so this feedback was sought during the six-week public consultation, Phase 2.

3.2.6 Publication of the consultation report – this report will be published online to allow stakeholders to view the results of the consultation process.

3.3 Dissemination of consultation materials

3.3.1 Consideration was given to the best form of communication for each stakeholder group to engage. Schools are used to the system of generic emails, so this was deemed appropriate and followed this expected format.

3.3.2 Communications to parents, the Local Governing Board and staff were all written specifically for these groups in acknowledgement of their existing relationship with the school and in acknowledgement of the impact this policy change may have upon them. It was also felt that these stakeholder groups had a high vested interest but were least familiar with the process and terminology used around policy consultation so would require further explanation.

3.3.3 Website content was kept jargon free and used simple language to ensure accessibility for all interested groups.

4. Consultation feedback

4.1 Availability of information

As described above, the draft policy, explanation of changes and contact information was available through email links, the schools' website, and through direct letters to specified groups.

Hard copies were available upon request. The consultation was also mentioned in each school newsletter, which has a high take up rate and is the most reliable way to reach families who are harder to engage with electronically.

A reminder email and/or app message was sent to all stakeholder groups on the 11th January 2021.

4.2 Stakeholder Feedback: respondents and comments

Across all four schools, only four emails were received with feedback. One confirmed that the Chair of the Somerdale Local Governing Board (LGB) did not have further feedback. One was an email from North Somerset Council, Admissions confirming that they were happy the propose draft met legal requirements and reminding of dates for completion of the consultation and publication of new policy.

The third and fourth emails contained feedback and questions from members of the Parklands and Mulberry Park Local Governing Body's and raised points of formatting for correction and a correction of consistency for the reference to North Somerset Council in the Parklands document.

Also raised in these emails was the use of the word 'will' in the following statement of the policy:

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.

4.3 Changes and conclusion

Changes of formatting and consistency of reference were agreed. Upon discussion and reference to feedback from Browne Jacobson, it was decided that the sentence above should remain as the most clear and complete expression of the Trust's legal obligation with regards to the Admissions Code.

Appendix A: Stakeholders list and contact method

Group	Method of comms	Rationale
Local Governing Board	Email direct	Without the pandemic, intention was to seek feedback from these groups prior to public consultation, with briefing papers and discussion in person provided at a meeting. However, this was not possible due to constraints of workload for senior staff throughout 2020. LGB members have an ETAT specific email and are familiar with this way of communication.
Staff	Direct email	Staff are familiar with updates delivered in this way. A notice or copies would usually be placed in staff rooms and work area also but this was rejected due to current operating conditions.
Existing parents	Letter via email or app message	Each school has a 'Communication Plan' that designates appropriate method for disseminating information to parents. At two of the school, this is using an app message with the letter attached. At two schools this is a direct email with letter, as an attachment.
LA's and neighbouring schools	Direct email	This is the accepted and 'standard' format for admissions consultations.
Local nurseries and child minders	Emailed direct	Nurseries were emailed with a view to seeking their feedback but also to ask if they could make potential families aware of the consultation, as this the group possibly most affected. Further work can be done to improve this next time.
General Public	website page	It is hard to identify a group of people who may be interested but not yet in contact with the school community. As such, the website was used, with further information about the consultation on a separate tab/page, directly beneath info about admissions

Appendix B: Screen shot of Somerdale Consultation Page.

Admissions Consultation 2020



Somerdale Educate Together Primary, part of Educate Together Academy Trust, are consulting on their proposed admission arrangements for the 2022-23 school year and beyond.

This public consultation is to ensure all ETAT schools are operating to the same admissions criteria, in accordance with our equality principles in addition to complying with the Admissions Code 2014 requirement for consultation when changes are proposed. The Trust believe the new policy, presented in this consultation, provides fair access to our schools and clarifies the Trust's position without making significant changes to our existing policy.

Included in the consultation are parents and families at the school, staff and the Local Governing Board, parents at local nurseries and surrounding schools. Bath and North East Somerset Council will also be invited to comment.

The consultation opened on Monday 14 December 2020 and will run until 24th January 2021.

The Proposed Policy and a Statement of Changes can be found here:

[Admissions Policy DRAFT 2020](#)

[Admissions Consultation statement of changes](#)

You can e-mail comments to: consultation@somerdaleet.org.uk

Or, alternatively, you may submit responses in writing to:

Nikki Buglass, Trust Development Manager

c/o Redfield Educate Together Primary

Avonvale Road

Bristol

BS5 9RH

Following the consultation period, the Trust Board and Local Governing Board will consider all comments received in determining the admission arrangements for 2022 and make a decision by 28 February 2021.

The final policy and Consultation report will be available on the school website from 1st March 2021.

Appendix C: email to schools and LA, Parklands ET

Hello,

Parklands Educate Together Primary, part of Educate Together Academy Trust, are consulting on their proposed admission arrangements for the 2022-23 school year and beyond. This consultation is to ensure all ETAT schools are operating to the same admissions criteria, in accordance with our equality principles. As we have previously had pupils from your childcare setting, we would like to ensure that all potential future Parklands ET families have a chance to join the consultation. We would be grateful if you could share this information with any families who may be interested.

The main proposed changes from the current arrangements are a change to wording with regards to deferred entry in reception class places and additions to clarify the Trust's position on applications from pupils with previous exclusions from other settings and places obtained by the provision of fraudulent information.

The consultation opened on Monday 14 December 2020 and will run until 24th January 2021.

You are invited to review the documents and submit comments to the consultation which is available here: <https://www.parklandset.org.uk/parents-community/>

Alternatively, you may submit responses in writing to:

Nikki Buglass
Trust Development Manager
c/o Redfield Educate Together Primary
Avonvale Road
Bristol
BS5 9RH

Following the consultation period, the Trust Board and Local Governing Board will consider all comments received in determining the admission arrangements for 2022 and make a decision by 28 February 2021.

The final policy and Consultation report will be available on the school website from 1st March 2021.

Kind regards,

Nikki Buglass
Trust Development Manager



T: 0117 379 0119

M: 0781 115 6078

Nikki.buglass@educatetogether.org.uk

www.educatetogether.org.uk

Avonvale Road, Redfield, Bristol, BS5 9RH



Appendix D: Email to nurseries, pre-schools and childminders, Parklands ET

Hello,

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Trust Development Manager



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Avonvale Road, Redfield, Bristol, BS5 9RH



The information contained within this e-mail / attachments are confidential. If you are not the intended recipient, please delete the message and attachments immediately and notify the sender. Any unauthorised dissemination or copying of this e-mail or any message

Appendix E: Letter to parents, Redfield. Shared with parents via the Seesaw app.



Redfield Admissions Consultation
14.12.20

Hello,

As you may be aware, all schools are required to undergo 6-week public consultation every seven years, or when proposing changes to their Admissions Policy.

As the Admissions Authority for the Educate Together Academy Trust, the Board has asked the BESTeam to undertake a public consultation across all its schools to bring their admissions policies into line with each other, for the Academic year 2022/23 and beyond.

As such, we are seeking your feedback now, as part of the consultation process, which will be 'Live' from the 14th December 2020 until the 24th January 2021.

The current policy and proposed, draft policy can be found on the school [website](#), along with a statement of changes and details of ways you can feedback. We believe the changes proposed do not present a material change to admissions within the schools but clarify and strengthen the schools' position with regards to admission queries outside the norm.

Once the consultation closes, all feedback will be considered, and a final policy will be approved. This will be published on the school's website on the 1st March 2021.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Wishing you and your families a restful time over the coming break.

Best wishes,

Nikki Buglass
Trust Development Manager