



School Admissions Policy

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain **how to apply** for a place at William Stockton Primary and Nursery school
- Set out the school's **arrangements for allocating places to the pupils** who apply
- Explain **how to appeal** against a decision not to offer a child a place

Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [School Admissions Code](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)
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William Stockton Primary and Nursery School is required to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#).

Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority. In Cheshire West and Chester, this is through the online portal or via a paper form from a local school, nursery or downloaded from the website.

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, or
- This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted

Admissions to the Reception Year

Subject to the criteria set out below, children will be admitted in the September following their fourth birthday. The School has an agreed admission number of 50 pupils for entry in reception. The school will accordingly admit up to 50 pupils.

Places will be allocated by the Cheshire West and Chester admissions on the basis of applications received through the Cheshire West admissions system. This allows parents/guardians to apply for entry to any Cheshire West primary school by means of the Cheshire West Primary School Common Application Form (CAF) available in the 'Applying for school Places' document published on the CWAC website. The school will offer places on a full-time basis from the start of the Autumn Term.

Request for admission outside the normal year group

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- The headteacher's views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis

of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in section 6. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

Oversubscription criteria

All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out below, in order, until all places are filled.

1. 'Looked after children' and children who were previously 'looked after' – see definitions above.
2. Priority will next be given to children with siblings at the school in the reception through to year five. Siblings include step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address. Priority will **not be** given to children with siblings who are former pupils of the school nor siblings who are due to leave William Stockton Primary and move to high school the next year or siblings with whom the applicant does not live.
3. Priority will next be given to children resident within the designated catchment zone of the school. Children will be classed within this category if they and their parents or carers are resident within the areas served by the school at the time of application. However, for the normal admission rounds, the authority may consider a change of address providing the child is resident in the new property and supporting documentation is received by 21 February for reception applications, when the authority will begin the allocation of places process. Our catchment map can be seen via the link below.
https://maps.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/cwac/webmapping?&e=339779.08&n=376480.29&layers=AU_S_PrimaryCatchments_POLY_CURRENT&gotofield=SCHOOL&gotovalue=William%20Stockton%20Community%20School&s=5000.00&bm=oscolour
4. Pupils living nearest to the school measured in a straight line from the centrally plotted Basic Land and Property Unit point of the child's home address to the centrally plotted basic land and property unit point of the school as defined by local land and property gazetteer.

Attending our school nursery is NOT a criteria for entrance to school and no applicant will be disadvantaged if they did not attend our on site nursery.

Where it is not possible to accommodate all pupils qualifying under one of the criteria stated above, the next criteria will also be applied to determine priority for admission. For example, if it is not possible to accommodate all siblings for whom an application has been received, all sibling applicants will be prioritized in the order of:

- Siblings who live within the school's designated catchment area
- Siblings who do not live within the school's designated catchment area

All applicants within each criterion will be put into distance order with priority being given to those that live nearest to the school, as stated above.

Where it is identified that there are a limited number of places available and the local authority cannot differentiate between the applications using the nearest school criterion, a random allocation tie-breaker will be applied. This may be required for example, where applicants reside in the same block of flats or separate addresses measuring the same distance from school.

Fair Access Protocol:

The School participates in Cheshire West Local Authority Fair Access protocol.

Right of Appeal:

In the event of an unsuccessful application, parents have the right to appeal to an independent appeals panel against non-admission. Appeal forms can be requested from the school and appeals can be lodge up to 20 school days from the date of the offer letter. Where an in-year application and subsequent appeal are unsuccessful the Admissions Authority will not consider a repeat application within the same academic year unless there has been a relevant and significant change of circumstances relating to the application, or a place has become available in school.

The school will hold a waiting list until the end of the autumn term for the Reception intake and parents are asked to keep in touch to find out if a place has become available.

Further information can be found in the 'Applying for school places' document produced by Cheshire West.

Equal preferences

All preferences will be considered on the basis of the equal preference model for allocating places, in accordance with legal requirements. This means that in the first instance, all preferences will be considered against the school's published oversubscription criteria only, without reference to the preference ranking. Where a pupil can potentially be allocated more than one school place stated on the application form, the single offer, determined by the home authority, will be the school ranked highest on the application form by the parents or carers.

If the pupil is a Cheshire West and Chester resident and Cheshire West and Chester Council, as the home authority, is not able to offer any of the preferences stated on the form, a place will be allocated at the nearest Cheshire West and Chester school (including faith schools) with known vacancies using the authority's mapping system for measuring straight line distances from the Basic Land and Property Unit point of the home address to the Basic Land and Property Unit point of the school in miles.

Where an application has been received from a parent resident in another authority and a place cannot be offered, Cheshire West and Chester Council will not allocate an alternative school place.

Children of multiple births

In relation to children of multiple births, exceptionally it may be necessary to offer places over the published admission number. This is to ensure that, as far as possible, siblings (twins, triplets or children from other multiple births) can attend the same school.

In normal circumstances, the local authority will not be able to agree admission over the published admission number where to do so would result in a breach of infant class size legislation, which requires that infant classes, where the majority of children will reach the age of five, six or seven contain no more than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher.

However, the School Admissions Code allows the admittance of a sibling in the same school year (twins, triplets or children from other multiple births) as a permitted exception where one sibling can be offered the place and not the other. This is a discretionary permitted exception and may not be agreed if the admittance of more children into a particular year group would cause prejudice to the efficient education and efficient use of resources to other children in that year group.

Children of UK service personnel

Places will be allocated in advance of the family arriving in the area for children of UK service personnel and veterans, 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 local authority oversubscription criteria.

In addition, it may be necessary to offer places above the published admission number as the School Admissions Code allows the admittance of a forces child as a permitted exception in relation to infant class size legislation. This is a discretionary permitted exception and may not be agreed if the admittance of more children into a particular year group would cause prejudice to the efficient education and efficient use of resources to other children in that year group. Consideration for applications for children of UK service personnel and veterans is given in accordance with the Cheshire West Armed Forces Covenant.

Parents and Carers with shared responsibility for a child

Where parents or carers have shared responsibility for a child the place of residency will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the week, for example, where the child wakes up between Monday to Friday. Full details must be submitted in writing to enable the local authority to determine which address will be used for the purpose of admission. A panel of officers will consider the information provided. If the panel agree that sufficient evidence has been provided, then this address will be used for the purpose of assigning a criterion to the application.

Where the local authority is unable to reach a decision based on the information received, for example, where a child lives equally with both parents, the address provided for claiming child benefit and where appropriate, child tax credits or equivalent will be applied to the admission application. In such circumstances, documentary evidence must be provided. Any delay in receiving any required information will result in the local authority determining residence for the purpose of admission based on the information available to it.

Moving house

Parents and carers must inform the authority immediately of a change of address, even if details of a future change of residency were included on the application form as this may change a child's oversubscription criteria for a particular school. The authority will require supporting evidence to show that the place of residency has changed, for example completion of sale, tenancy agreements, council tax and utility bills and any other information considered relevant to the application, including disposal of previous property. In addition, proof that the child now resides at the new property will be required i.e. child benefit or child tax credit. For normal admission round supporting evidence must be received by the date as stated in part two.

In respect of applications made as part of the normal admission round, information and supporting evidence must be received by the dates in part two of these arrangements. Proof of residency received after the published dates will not be used to process the application, but will be used to send the decision letter on the published offer date.

Waiting lists

Waiting lists will be held in oversubscription criteria order and not on a first come, first served basis. A vacant place will be reallocated to the child with the highest oversubscription criteria on the school's waiting list on the day the place became available.

Placing a child's name on a waiting list does not affect the statutory right of appeal.

Waiting lists for Reception will be held until the end of the autumn term.

Changing preferences

In respect of applications made for the normal point of entry, the local authority will not accept a change of preference made after the published closing date without a genuine reason, such as a recent house move. Full details must be provided to the local authority for consideration, along with supporting documentation. If the authority's decision is that the reason, based on the evidence provided is not valid, then the application will be treated as a late application and as such notification of the outcome of that application will be after the accept/decline date as stated in part two. It is important therefore that parents and carers give full consideration to the preferences they make on their on time application form.

Other relevant changes of circumstances, e.g. admission of a sibling

Further information received after the supporting documentation deadlines, as stated in part two will not be considered as part of the on time allocation process. The information will be assessed after the accept/decline date and any changes that would assign a different criterion to an application, for example, sibling, in catchment, will be applied to the application and used to determine where the child falls on a waiting list.

Late applications – Normal admission round only

Late applications for places at Cheshire West and Chester schools, i.e. applications not submitted to the authority by the relevant statutory closing date will be considered after all on time applications unless the local authority considers that there are good reasons for the application being late, which must be stated at the time of application, for example, exceptional medical reasons preventing an earlier application, late removal into the area. Supporting documentation must be provided.

Where supporting documentation has been received by the date specified in part two of these arrangements and the authority has accepted reasons stated for the late application, the application will be considered as if it had been received on time.

Late applications and supporting documentation received after the dates specified will be considered after all on time applications even where the authority accepts that there are good reasons for the late application and as such these applications may be disadvantaged in the consideration of their preferences.

Late applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application after the published offer date specified in part two of these arrangements.

Accepting and declining places – Normal admission round only

There is no longer an expectation for parents to accept or decline their place however, if the family choose to not take up a place, we ask that they let Cheshire West and Chester admissions know.

In-year applications

In-year admissions will be handled by the school when received through the online system. Applications should be made via the Cheshire West website:

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/education-and-learning/school-admissions/school-admissions.aspx>

In year applications are those received after the 1st September into the relevant age group or at any time into any other year group.

Parents and carers, irrespective of where they reside who are seeking in year school places for schools and academies in Cheshire West and Chester authority are required to apply. Parents and carers must complete an online form available on the local authority's website, which is directed to the school or academy for processing.

Waiting lists will be held by William Stockton Primary school in oversubscription criteria order and not on a first come, first served basis. Any child refused a school place will automatically be placed on the school's waiting list and will be considered together with children for whom an appeal has been received and any new applicants. Schools will be responsible for administering and updating their waiting lists: families will be called at the end of the school year to see whether they wish to continue to be on the waiting list for September of the following year.

A school place is not considered available until the school or academy is able to remove a child from roll according to the local authority's safeguarding protocol. Parents and carers must notify the school if there are any changes in circumstances that would impact their oversubscription criteria for the waiting list.

Exceeding the school's PAN

The school may decide to exceed the PAN in Key Stage 2. However, this will be dependent on the current class sizes and whether admitting extra pupils would be detrimental to those already on roll. We will not exceed our PAN for Foundation and KS1 applications unless there are exceptional and permitted reasons.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the governing board will publicly consult on these

changes. If nothing changes, it will publicly consult on the school's admission arrangements at least once every 7 years.

Arrangements written: Spring 2024