

Ormiston Sheffield Community Academy

Secondary School Admissions Policy

2023 / 2024

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Policy Version Control

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Contents

1. Policy statement and principles	3
1.1 Policy aims and principles.....	3
1.2 Monitoring and review.....	3
2. Academy admissions	3
2.1 Definitions.....	4
2.2 Eligibility criteria	4
2.3 Waiting list.....	4
2.4 Withdrawal of a place.....	5
2.5 Determining arrangements and consultation	5
2.6 Admission of children outside their normal age group	5
2.7 Complaints about admissions arrangements.....	6
3. Secondary admissions	6
4. Sixth Form admissions	8

1. Policy statement and principles

1.1 Policy aims and principles

This policy is designed to ensure there is an open and fair admissions procedure for all applicants and to help guide parents and their children through the application process. The academy's admissions arrangements will not unfairly disadvantage a child, either directly or indirectly, from a particular social or racial group, or a child with a disability or special educational needs, and that other academy policies do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child.

This policy details the academies arrangements for admissions and will apply to all admissions from September 2023 to July 2024. This includes in-year admissions within this period.

Parents are encouraged to visit the academy with their child if they are planning to apply for a place. We have two open evenings during September followed by open mornings, details of these will be published on our website www.scacademy.co.uk Arrangements for visits outside of these dates can be made by calling the academy office on 01922-685777.

The Academy Trust will consult on the admissions arrangements at least once every seven years or if there are proposed changes to the admission arrangements which require consultation.

This policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by OAT / the academy and is written in line with current legislation and guidance.

1.2 Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and / or government guidance
- As a result of any other significant change or event
- As the result of a decision of an Adjudicator
- In the event that the policy is determined not to be effective

If there are urgent concerns these should be raised to the Clerk to the Governors in the first instance for them to determine whether a review of the policy is required in advance of the review date.

2. Academy admissions

The academy admits students between the ages of 11-18. The main intakes are:

- Secondary
- Sixth Form

We encourage entry at the academy's main intake time so as to aid academic progression without interruption, however, applications are welcome for entry in any year.

2.1 Definitions

The academy uses the following definitions when applying this policy:

Distance

This is the straight line distance between the academy main gate and the child's home address (front door) as measured by the Walsall LA computerised system. Where two dwellings have the same front entrance the closest dwelling to the front door (lower floor and counting clockwise) will be regarded as being closer to the academy.

Dual address

Where a child lives at two different addresses, the 'home' address will be determined as the address at which the child resides for the majority of school nights. School nights are Sunday night to Thursday night inclusive. In a case where the child spends an equal number of school nights at each address, then the address where the child benefit is paid will be used. Where no child benefit is claimed the address used to register the child with a doctor will be used.

Siblings

A sibling is defined as:

- A brother or sister (including half brothers or sisters) who shares one or both parents, whether or not resident at the same address.
- A step brother or sister where the two children are related by a parent's marriage
- An adopted or foster child living at the same address under the terms of the residents' order
- Another child living at the same address where the adult has parental responsibility

In the case of twins or other children from multiple births (two or more siblings in one year group) and where only one place is available, the application will be considered together as one application.

2.2 Eligibility criteria

In line with The School Admissions Code 2014 ("the Code") Ormiston Sheffield Community Academy will respond to applications for children coming from overseas in accordance with European Union law or Home Office rules for non-European Economic Area nationals. The academy will not refuse a place simply because of doubts about the child's immigration status.

2.3 Waiting list

If the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, children who have been refused a place will be automatically placed on the Walsall Local Authority waiting list, unless there is a specific request that this should not happen. Waiting lists are held by Walsall Admissions and Pupil Place Planning Team on a termly basis and will be discarded at the end of each term. Applicants wishing to remain on the waiting list will need to reapply to Walsall at the start of each school term.

2.4 Withdrawal of a place

The academy will only withdraw an offer of a place if:

- The place was offered in error
- Acceptance of the place was not received in a reasonable period of time
- The offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application (the academy may request evidence to ensure the child meets the admissions criteria) – if this occurs the application will be considered afresh

The academy will not withdraw the place if the student has started at the academy unless the place was obtained fraudulently. If this is the case, then the academy will decide whether to withdraw the place based on the circumstances including the length of time the child has been at the academy.

2.5 Determining arrangements and consultation

Admissions arrangements will be set annually, this will happen even if there are no changes from previous years and a consultation is not required.

If the academy changes any significant aspect of the admissions procedure, then OAT will be informed prior to making changes and beginning the consultation process. Any significant changes proposed by the academy must be approved by OAT.

The academy will consult on admissions arrangements when changes to the academies arrangements are proposed (no consultation is required for an increase in PAN or changes to ensure compliance with the admissions regulations). Where the admission arrangements have not changed from the previous year there is no requirement to consult, subject to the requirement that we must consult on our admission arrangements at least once every seven years, even if there have been no changes during that period.

We will publish any consultation for admissions on our website and notify appropriate stakeholders. If there are any substantive responses to the academy's consultation, then these will be sent to OAT. Any subsequent changes will be made in consultation with OAT.

Once our admissions arrangements have been determined we will notify the appropriate bodies and publish a copy of the determined arrangements on our website.

2.6 Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. If parents wish to do this, they must contact the academy at the earliest opportunity to avoid any delays in the application process.

The decision whether a child is admitted outside of their normal age group will be made on a case by case basis by the academy's governing body. A panel of at least three governors will consider the admission request based on the student's:

- Academic ability
- Social and emotional development
- Views of the parents and principal; and
- Any additional relevant information available

The panel will have to be satisfied that the child would be able to cope with the work of the year applied for and that the student would be able to cope with the personal development whilst being with a year group who are of a different age. In order to support any application parents will need to submit evidence to demonstrate that the admission into a different year group is in the best interests of the child.

Once the governing body has made a decision the child can then apply to the academy using the process detailed in this policy. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place however this right does not apply if the child is offered a place at the academy but it is not in their preferred age group.

2.7 Complaints about admissions arrangements

Any person, or body, can make an objection to the Schools Adjudicator when they consider the academy's arrangements are unlawful, or not in compliance with the School Admissions Code / relevant legislation relating to admissions.

3. Secondary admissions process

The process detailed in this section is for secondary admissions. If you require further information on this process, please contact Mrs Dunne at the academy.

Number of spaces

The academy has an agreed pupil admission number (PAN) of 240 students per year group.

Application process

Applications for the September 2023 academic year begin in September 2022. Parents must submit an online Local Authority application form https://go.walsall.gov.uk/school_admissions **Additionally**, to apply to Ormiston Sheffield Community Academy parents **must also complete** the academy's online application form on our website www.scacademy.co.uk by 31st October 2022

Late applications will not be considered until all other applications have been reviewed.

All offers of secondary places will be made through the Local Authority. The academy will not contact parents about the outcome of their application until the offer from the Local Authority has been received. All offers will be made on the secondary national offer day (1st March or the next working day).

Selection criteria

All children whose statement of special educational needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) names the academy will be admitted. If the academy is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

If the academy receives more applications than there are available places, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the oversubscription criteria set out below:

Criterion 1: Looked after children or previously looked after children

A 'looked after child' is either a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989); or 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. Previously looked after children are those who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

Criterion 2: Children of members of staff

Children of members of staff where the member of staff has been employed at the academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made and children of members of staff who have been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

Criterion 3: A sibling

Children who have a sibling registered at the academy at the time of application. Sibling is defined in paragraph 2.1 above. In the case of twins or other children from multiple births (two or more siblings in one year group) and where only one place is available, the application will be considered together as one application.

Criterion 4: Distance from the academy to the home address

Priority will be given to children living closest to the academy. Distance is defined in paragraph 2.1 above; documentary evidence of ownership or a rental agreement for a residence may be required. The offer of a place is based on the address at the time the offer is made. If a child is offered a place when the academy is oversubscribed, and it is found that the child moved before the offer was made to an address further from the academy, the offer may be withdrawn if it is considered to have been the result of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

Definitive tie-breaker: in the event of there being a tie, there will be a random ballot using an electronic random number generator. Such a ballot will be supervised by an officer of the Local Authority.

Parents who do not obtain a place for their child have the right to appeal to the academy against the decision. Should this occur there will be an Independent Appeals Panel appointed in accordance with the provisions of the School Admission Appeals Code.

Mid-year admissions

Parents should submit a Mid-year Admissions Form to the academy. This can be found on the academy website www.scacademy.co.uk under the admissions tab.

Appeals

Parent should submit an Appeal Form to the academy. This can be found on the academy website www.scacademy.co.uk under the admissions tab.

A child is allowed to be on the academy waiting list while lodging an appeal and the appeal will not affect their position on the list. The decision of the Appeals Panel is binding on the academy.

4. Sixth Form admissions process

The process detailed in this section is for admissions for Sixth Form. For further information on this process please contact Mrs Davies, Director of Sixth Form.

Number of spaces

200 places are available for Sixth Form students. All students in the current Year 11 who meet the academic selection criteria will continue to Sixth Form, if they wish.

Application Process

Applications for the September 2023 academic year begin on 1st December 2022. To apply you need to complete the academy's application form available on our website and submit this directly to the academy's Sixth Form office by 20th January 2023.

The academy will contact the student applying directly about the outcome of their application. Late applications will only be considered where there are a surplus of places in the academy/course(s) applied for once the oversubscription criteria has been applied.

Selection criteria

Children with the academy named on an education, health care plan (EHCP) or equivalent will be automatically admitted to the academy provided that they meet the minimum academic qualifications for entry.

All internal candidates seeking transfer to our Sixth Form, and all external candidates seeking admission to the Sixth Form, will need to have the same minimum academic qualifications for entry, which are:

A Level Pathway

To undertake advanced level courses you will require a minimum of five GCSEs in five separate subjects, at grade C or above, including English and Mathematics, both at least a minimum of grade 4. BTEC qualifications will count as one subject and must be graded a Distinction or above.

To study Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Physics, Combined English, English Literature and Mathematics a GCSE grade B or grade 6 is required. *(Please note: To study Biology, Chemistry or Physics, students must have studied either Triple or Additional Science)*

BTEC Pathway/Football Academy

To undertake vocational courses you will require a minimum of five GCSEs in five separate subjects, graded a D or above. Each BTEC qualification will count as one subject.

A minimum of grade 4 is required in both English and Mathematics.

Oversubscription criteria

If the academy receives more applications than there are available places, then priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the oversubscription criteria set out below:

Criterion 1: Looked after children or previously looked after children

A 'looked after child' is either a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989); or 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. Previously looked after children are those who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

Criterion 2: Children of members of staff

Children of members of staff where the member of staff has been employed at the academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made and children of members of staff who have been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

Criterion 3: A sibling

Children who have a sibling registered at the academy at the time of application. Sibling is defined in paragraph 2.1 above. In the case of twins or other children from multiple births (two or more siblings in one year group) and where only one place is available, the application will be considered together as one application.

Criterion 4: Distance from the academy to the home address

Priority will be given to children living closest to the academy. Distance is defined in section 2.1. Documentary evidence of ownership or a rental agreement for a residence may be required. The offer of a place is based on the address at the time the offer is made. If a child is offered a place when the academy is oversubscribed, and it is found that the child moved before the offer was made to an address further from the academy, the offer may be withdrawn if it is considered to have been the result of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

Definitive tie-breaker: in the event of there being a tie, there will be a random ballot using an electronic random number generator. Such a ballot will be supervised by an officer of the Local Authority.

Unsuccessful applicants will be offered the opportunity to be put on the waiting list. The academy will maintain a waiting list until 31 December following the main academy intake in September of the same year. Each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the academy's oversubscription criteria. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received or the date when they were added to the list.

The parents of any child refused a place at the academy have a right to appeal to an independent appeal panel. The decision of the independent appeal panel is binding on all parties.