

## STOKE-ON-TRENT CITY COUNCIL

### ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED NURSERY SETTINGS AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS FOR 2021-22

#### 1. Nursery Provision

- 1.1 Children aged three years on or before 31 August are able to attend a nursery class or school in September. Attendance at school is not a requirement at this age but is at the discretion of parents.
- 1.2 Oversubscription Criteria  
Where there are more applications for a nursery setting than there are places the following priorities will be used, in order, to allocate places:
1. Children in care and children who ceased to be in care because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order), including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
  2. Children living within the catchment who have an elder brother or sister at the school who will still be attending at the time of admission (or at the linked junior school in the case of infant schools).
  3. Other children living within the catchment.
  4. Children living outside the catchment who have an elder brother or sister at the school who will still be attending at the time of admission (or at the linked junior school in the case of infant schools).
  5. Children who live nearest to the school as determined by a straight line measurement from the child's home address point to the main entrance of the school.
- 1.3 Once the class is full a waiting list based on these criteria will be held until the end of September of that academic year.
- 1.4 Attendance at a particular nursery setting will not guarantee admission to a reception class at the same school.
- 1.5 As nursery education is not compulsory there is no right of appeal against the refusal of a place. However, every effort will be made to accommodate the wishes of parents.

#### 2. Primary Provision

- 2.1 Admission to primary school is provided for all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Where a child is offered a place at a school, that child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday; the child's parents can defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which it was made; and where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.
- 2.2 All applications for admission to community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided schools and academies at 4+ are managed by the Council. Preferences made by parents living in Stoke-on-Trent for schools in other local authority areas should

also be made through the Council. This is known as the co-ordinated admission scheme. To help this process applicants are required to fill out a common application form. This can be done on-line.

2.3 Schools have a Pupil Admission Number (PAN) for each year group, including the reception class. The PAN is expected to be based upon the school's net capacity. Places will be offered up to but not exceeding the PAN. Regulations also require that reception and infant classes must have no more than 30 pupils to each qualified teacher.

2.4 Parents are asked to name five schools, in order of preference, which they would like their child to attend. Admissions authorities have to consider preferences in accordance with their published admissions criteria. They cannot take account of where the school is placed in the order of preferences.

#### 2.5 Oversubscription Criteria

Where there are more applications for a community or voluntary controlled primary school than there are places available, the Council will use the following priorities, in order, to allocate places:

1. Children in care and children who ceased to be in care because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order), including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
2. Children living in the catchment area of the school who have an older brother or sister attending at the time of admission (or at the linked junior school in the case of infant schools).
3. Other children living within the catchment area of the school.
4. Children living outside the catchment area of the school who have an elder brother or sister at the school at the time of admission (or at the linked junior school in the case of infant schools).
5. Children who live nearest to the school as determined by a straight line measurement from the child's home address point to the main entrance of the school.

2.6 If priorities have to be decided within any of these categories, children will be placed in order of priority using distance from their home to the main entrance of the school as measured by straight line. Where distance is equal for two or more applications, a tie-breaker will be applied whereby places will be determined by random allocation. The Council will also consider any reasons put forward by parents in support of their preference. These reasons should be supported with evidence wherever possible. If the reasons concern the child's health or social wellbeing, the evidence should be provided by a medical practitioner or other social care professional. If the Council considers that the reasons for a place at a particular school are sufficiently strong, it will place the child on the school list at the top of the criterion of which they have been ranked.

2.7 The Council also has to comply with the Infant Class Sizes Regulations which say that infant classes must not exceed 30 pupils. If an infant class is full, a waiting list based on the above criteria must be held until the end of December of that academic year (See 3.10). All unsuccessful applicants will be placed on the waiting list of a school or schools – and will remain on the list until the list closes, a place becomes available or the family ask to be removed from the waiting list.

- 2.8 For admission purposes, an older brother or sister is defined as a child who lives at the same address and who is the brother/sister, half-brother/sister (i.e. share one common parent), or step brother/sister (i.e. related by parent's marriage/civil partnership) of the child for whom the place is being requested. It also includes any other child living at the same residence under the terms of a Residence Order.
- 2.9 Special arrangements will apply if there is space for only one of a set of twins or triplets or other multiple birth. In this circumstance the Council will admit above the published admission number (PAN) unless it is impossible to accommodate siblings in such a way, when the parents will be asked make a decision on behalf of the family.
- 2.10 Admission outside normal age-group – parents may request that places be made available outside the normal age group (eg, if a child is summer-born, gifted and talented, or has experienced problems such as ill-health, etc). A decision will be taken by the admission authority on the basis of the circumstances of the case and taking account of the views of the head teacher of the school concerned.
- 2.11 Part-time provision - parents can request that their child takes up the place part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.
- 2.12 Where applicants are unsuccessful in securing a place at their preference school, an appeal against the decision can be made to an independent appeals panel set up by the City Council. The decision to appeal does not prevent parents from accepting an alternative school while the appeal process takes place.

### **3. Additional Notes**

- 3.1 Families are strongly encouraged to read the Stoke-on-Trent prospectus, which gives details of the policies of all Stoke-on-Trent schools, as well as useful advice/guidance.
- 3.2 Pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are considered separately and before everyone else and must be accepted by the school named on their EHCP. They will count towards the school's admission number.
- 3.3 Only those holding parental responsibility for the named child are able to make an application and they will be required to make a declaration to this effect as part of the application process. Ordinarily it is expected that this person resides at the same address as the child and is referred to as the parent for admission purposes. Where parental responsibility is equally shared, the child's parents should determine which parent should submit the application.

Only one application can be made for each child. It is expected that parents will agree on school preferences for a child before an application is made. The Council is not in a position to intervene in disputes between parents over school applications and will request that these are resolved privately.

If parents cannot agree and neither has obtained a court order stating who should be making the application/what the preference(s) should be, the Council will accept an application from the parent in receipt of Child Benefit for the child. If Child Benefit is not claimed, the address at which the child is registered at the GP will be used.

- 3.4 Late applications will be considered alongside those received by the closing date only in the event of one of the following:
1. the family moved into the area after the deadline for the receipt of applications;

2. exceptional circumstances, stated in writing with evidence, prevented the form from arriving on time; or
3. an error on the part of the school; or
4. the application is received before Own Admission Authority schools have ranked their applications.

Such considerations will be the exception rather than the rule. Otherwise late applications will be considered at the end of the allocation process.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that their application is submitted on-time. When submitting an application there may be a need to provide supporting evidence.

The Council cannot accept responsibility for any application or evidence that is not submitted correctly via the on-line system or is lost in the postal system. Correctly submitted on-line applications generate an electronic receipt, which must be retained by the applicant. If posting an application, it is recommended that the form is sent by recorded delivery.

- 3.5 Withdrawal of places - once parents have been notified of an offer of a school place the Council will withdraw the offer only in exceptional circumstances, such as:
  1. If the offer was made based on fraudulent or misleading information on the application form e.g. a false claim to residence within a catchment area.
  2. Where a place was offered in error.
- 3.6 Copies of school catchment area maps are available from the Council or individual schools.

### 3.7 Published Admission Numbers

Ball Green Primary	45
Burnwood Primary	90
Heron Cross Primary	60
Hillside Primary	30
Holden Lane Primary	30
Priory CE (C) Primary	60
Sandford Hill Primary	60
St. Paul's CE (C) Primary	45
Willows Primary	90

- 3.8 In-year Admissions – where applications for places are made outside the normal admissions round, these should be made directly to the school. During the school year only limited places are available and applicants moving into or within Stoke-on-Trent should not assume that their child will be automatically allocated a place at their local school. There is no guarantee of a place at any school, even if it is the catchment school. If the school is already full in the relevant year group, the application will be refused. The Council will make appropriate arrangements with schools for data sharing and pupil tracking.
- 3.9 The Council uses a Geographical Information system to calculate home to school distances. This determines co-ordinates of the applicant's home address using the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and OS Address Point data<sup>i</sup>.
- 3.10 By local agreement, waiting lists will be maintained until the end of the relevant academic year. A position on a waiting list is not fixed and applicants may move up and down the list. Inclusion on the list does not guarantee the ultimate provision of a place at this school.
- 3.11 The applicant's home address is the child's along with their parent's main and genuine place of residence at the time of the allocation of places. Where a pupil lives with separated parents, with shared responsibilities, each for part of the school week, the home address will be the one at which the pupil is resident for the greatest part of the week. Where this is equally shared, the home address used will be that used in relation to Child Benefit at the time of the allocation of places.
- 3.12 The Council will notify all applicants of the outcome of their application for a school place on the specified offer date (refer to the admissions timetable). All decision letters will be issued by second class post. However applicants who choose to make an online application will receive an email confirming their decision on the offer date.
- 3.13 Any application submitted after the closing date is deemed to be late and must be submitted using a paper application form. It is not possible to make an on-line application after the closing date. All additional school preferences (including where the applicant has decided to change their preference) must be made in writing to the School Admissions Team and those requests submitted after the closing date will be processed under this late applications and additional preferences arrangement (See 3.4).

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<sup>i</sup> *The child's home address point is used to determine the catchment within which the property lies.*