



Diss Infant Academy & Nursery

Pupil Admissions Policy (Primary)

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Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Procedures for admissions	3
3. Policy principles	3
4. First admissions for 2021-22	4
5. How parents can apply for their child to be admitted to the Reception Class of our academy.....	4
6. Admissions oversubscription criteria	5
7. In-year applications and applications to other year-groups	6
8. Appeals process	7
9. Children out of year group	7
10. Monitoring and review.....	7
APPENDIX 1	8

1. Introduction

The St Benet's Multi Academy Trust (MAT) is committed to the provision of high-quality education in the context of the Christian values of service, thankfulness and humility where individuals are valued, aspirations are high, hope is nurtured and talents released.

Diss Infant Academy & Nursery is an academy within the St Benet's MAT. The Trust is the Admissions Authority for the academy and is committed to considering all applications fairly and equally. In line with the Trust's Scheme of Delegation the Local Governing Body (LGB) is responsible for consultation, application decisions and for administering any appeals. All admissions are made through the process co-ordinated by the relevant Local Authority.

This Admissions Policy is subject to a statutory public consultation and conforms to the 2014 Schools Admissions Code and the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, as revised by the Education Act of 2002. The policy should be read in conjunction with admissions documentation provided by your home Local Authority. The Trustees of St Benet's MAT and Local Governors have made every effort to ensure that these arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code 2014 and all relevant legislation.

This policy references guidance from both Norfolk and Suffolk County Council as these will be the appropriate Local Authorities for the vast majority of parents [see Appendix 1 for definition of parent] applying for places in academies within the Diocese of Norwich's boundaries which extend beyond the county of Norfolk and include parts of Suffolk.

2. Procedures for admissions

Admissions to all St Benet's MAT academies are made through the process led by Norfolk (or Suffolk) County Council's admission team (see section 5 below for web links to the guidance). This policy gives you details of how to apply for admission to Diss Infant Academy & Nursery as well as the admission principles followed by the academy as set out by St Benet's MAT. The procedures relating to each type of admission are set out in the relevant section.

3. Policy principles

We seek to be an inclusive academy, welcoming children from all backgrounds and of all abilities and this Admissions Policy reflects this. A child's level of achievement or specific needs are not a barrier to admission to the academy.

Once a place has been offered, we will seek to discuss children and their individual needs with parents before they are admitted to the academy and seek to make any reasonable adjustments to accommodate all children.

We seek to follow all relevant legislation regarding admissions, including in the setting and application of our over-subscription criteria (see section 6).

We believe that ideally each child should be admitted to the school of their parents' choice. However, the school buildings cannot accommodate an unlimited number of children and excessive class sizes are detrimental to the education of the children in the class. The Published Admissions Number (PAN) for this school is 60. The academy will not usually admit children into classes if their admission would cause the class size to increase above legal or practical limits, or the Published Admissions Number to be breached.

4. First Admissions for 2021-22

Children enter school at the start of the school year in which they become five, so children born between 01 September 2016 and 31 August 2017 will begin school in September 2021. A full-time place will be offered from September for all children as detailed in the admission authorities code (Paragraph 2.16).

Deferment

Where parents are offered a place for their child in the Reception Year the law allows them to either take up the offer full-time in September, or ask to take up the offer part-time, or defer entry. If a parent wishes to defer entry to later in the year the place will be held open until the child starts school.

However, parents must take up the full-time place no later than the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday and must in any case take up the place before the end of the school year for which the original application was accepted. Parents are responsible for contacting the Headteacher to discuss deferring the place.

It is expected that children will be admitted only at the beginning of term unless there are exceptional circumstances.

For children born between 01 April and 31 August 2016 ('summer born children'), admission may only be deferred until April 2021. Parents with children born between these dates would not be breaking the law by not admitting them to school until September 2021, but schools may not keep places open for the whole of the reception year until September 2021. Such parents would need to re-apply for a place from September 2020.

For summer born children parents have the right to request consideration for their child to be admitted to reception class in September 2021. Admission authorities will consider requests to defer admission in accordance with Admissions Code (para 2.16 and 2.17).

5. How parents can apply for their child to be admitted to the Reception Class of our academy

Parents can apply online or by using a paper-based application form.

Completed paper application forms should be returned to The Admissions Team, Norfolk County Council's Children's Services, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich NR1 2DH (for Suffolk residents it is Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich IP1 2BX).

You can apply online, and find further information, at:

Norfolk: <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/admissions>

Suffolk: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions>

Applications for Reception Class admission September 2021 to August 2022 (i.e. for children born 1st September 2016 to 31st August 2017) must be received by Norfolk or Suffolk County Councils by 15th January 2021. Second and late applications will be considered according to criteria and dates set out on Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils' admission's web page (follow previous link).

Applications are processed by Norfolk County Council or Suffolk County Council on behalf of DNEAT and decision letters are sent to all applicants on 16th April 2021.

6. Admissions oversubscription criteria

In the case of oversubscription to this academy St Benet's MAT have delegated the application of oversubscription criteria to the Local Governing Body.

A child who has an Education Health and Care Plan (or statement of special educational need) naming the academy is required to be admitted.

If there are more children who wish to enter school than there are places, then the following oversubscription criteria will apply in order of priority:

- i. A child who has an Education Health & Care Plan naming the school or academy is required to be admitted.
- ii. Looked after children (children in care); previously looked after children (previously looked after children are children who *were* looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order, immediately following having been looked after); and children adopted from abroad.
- iii. Siblings of children already at the school living in the catchment area [for the definition of sibling and catchment area refer to items 2 and 3 in the definitions section of the Appendix 1].
- iv. Residence within the catchment area of the school [for explanation of resident refer to item 2 in the clarifications section of Appendix 1. For explanation of catchment area refer to item 3 in the definitions section of Appendix 1].
- v. Siblings of children already at the school living out of catchment [for definition of sibling and catchment area refer to items 2 and 3 in definitions section of Appendix 1].
- vi. Children of staff where:
 - a. A member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made and/or;
 - b. The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post where there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
- vii. Children who are due to transfer and live outside the area served by the school who attend a school within St Benet's MAT at the opening date of the admissions round.
- viii. Resident out of the catchment area of the school [for explanation of resident and catchment area refer to items 2 and 3 in the clarifications section of Appendix 1].

In the event of the having to use a tie-breaker to distinguish between two or more applications of equal strength, the child living the **shortest distance** from home to school in a straight line as the crow flies route should have priority [for explanation of shortest distance refer to item 3 in the clarifications section of Appendix 1].

If the Local Governing Body's decision is not to grant a place for your child, you have the right to appeal against its decision. You will be sent information on how to appeal.

7. In-year applications and applications to other year-groups

The Governors follow the accepted procedures agreed with Norfolk County Council in considering applicants at all other times of the year. The PAN of 60 per year group, as well as the upper limit on class sizes, is maintained (as far as possible) throughout the school. Governors apply the oversubscription criteria where necessary. No waiting lists are maintained for year groups other than the Reception year.

The following process for in-year application applies:

- i. Applications are not normally considered more than one term ahead of the date the place is required and only one application per school year is allowed. For full details of the process please refer to the relevant Local Authority's website.
- ii. Parents wishing to transfer their children from one school to another where there is no change of address should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with the Headteacher of their current school before applying for another school or academy. (see also item 8 below)
- iii. Parents who wish to make an in-year application for a place at a Norfolk academy should contact Norfolk County Council who will consult with the Academy and offer the place if one is available. For any Suffolk academy the Local Governing Body should be contacted – Suffolk County Council do not administer in-year admissions.
- iv. When a place becomes available in a year group that has been full at this academy, any applicant refused a place for that school year in the last 15 school days and any applicant for whom an appeal has been lodged and is still to be heard, will be considered alongside any new applications. The place will be offered to the pupil ranked highest in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The Academy is responsible for recording recent applications within the 15 school day period and managing this part of the process.
- v. All applications will be processed by Norfolk County Council within 15 school days and the decision communicated by writing.
- vi. If the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the Local Governing Body will use the published oversubscription criteria (see earlier in policy) to determine the offer of places. Any unsuccessful applicant has the right to appeal the decision to an independent panel and details of how to do this will be included in the decision letter.
- vii. When an offer of a place is made and the child already has a place in a local mainstream school, Norfolk County Council will offer the place from the start of the following term. The child will remain on roll at the previous school until they take up the place at this academy.

8. Appeals process

If the decision is not to grant a place for your child, you have the right to appeal against this decision. You will be sent information on how to appeal. Annual Admission round appeals must be heard within 40 school days. In-year appeals must be heard within 30 school days. There is no deadline for the submission of appeals which are independently administered by the Local Governing Body.

Unsuccessful applicants and appellants who are still unable to secure a place at this academy may only submit a fresh application if there has been a significant change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school, for example a house move.

If there is no significant change in circumstances, you can make another application for the following academic year but this will not normally be considered more than one term ahead of the date when you want your child to start at the school.

9. Children out of year group

It is expected that children will normally be educated within their chronological year group. However, the Local Governing Body, on behalf of St Benet's MAT, will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned in line with the School Admissions Code (December 2014). A request for admission out of year group can only be considered where the school has places available.

The admissions authority, St Benet's MAT, has delegated authority for this type of admission to this academy's Local Governing Body. You can make a request to the Local Governing Body in writing. This will need to include, where relevant, any supporting evidence. The Local Governing Body will make a decision on the request, taking into account the views of the Headteacher.

The academy will write to you with the outcome including the reasons for the decision. If the request is refused, you should be given the details of how to complain to the school.

10. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by St Benet's MAT and adopted by Local Governing Bodies annually but, in accordance with the 2014 School Admissions Code, will only be subject to public consultation every seven years unless changes are proposed (other than the correction of closing dates and definitions of school years). That consultation will last for a minimum of 6 weeks and will take place between 01 October and 31 January of the year before the arrangements are to apply (e.g. for a policy to apply to applications in 2021 – for admission in Sept 2021 onwards consultation must be completed by 31st January 2020). This consultation allows for Parents, other Schools and Academies, the Diocese, Local Authority and the local community to raise any concerns about the proposed admission arrangements.

Definitions:

1. Parent is defined as all people with parental responsibility for the child, including legal guardians.
2. Sibling is defined as brothers or sisters living at the same address including adopted children, step-brothers, step-sisters and children in foster care within a family unit.
3. Catchment area: All St Benet's MAT academies prioritise children living in the local area and within the Admissions Policy this is described as the school catchment area. Detailed information regarding catchment areas is available at www.wherellive.norfolk.gov.uk or www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions.

Clarifications:

1. The applicant for admission must be the parent or legal guardian of the child for whom admission is sought.
2. St Benet's MAT define "Resident" as the place where your child usually lives. We may need proof of this address. We will not treat your child as ordinarily resident if you rent or own a second home in the catchment/defined area or if you use another address to give the impression that your child lives in the catchment/defined area so that you have a higher priority for a place at that school. It does not apply to proposed moves into the designated area which have not taken place at the time an application is considered – unless proof, such as Exchange of Contracts or a signed Tenancy Agreement, can be provided at the time of application or exceptional late application.
 - a. We will consider Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children moving into an area as 'Resident' in that area when they apply for a school place.
3. We will measure the distance by a straight line ('as the crow flies'). All straight line distances are calculated electronically by the LA using data provided jointly by the Post Office and Ordnance Survey. The data plots the co-ordinates of each property and provides the address-point between which straight line distance is measured and reported to three decimal places. Where there is more than one home within a single building (for example apartments) we will measure to a single point within that building irrespective of where those homes are located.
 - a. In the unlikely event of two or more applicants living the same distance and competing for a single place, lots will be drawn by someone independent of the school to determine the successful applicant.
4. Multiple births – if the final place at the Academy is offered to a twin/triplet etc. and the remaining sibling(s) would ordinarily be refused a place, the Governors will offer places to the remaining sibling(s). It is not the Governors policy to separate twins/triplets etc. even when their admission would breach infant class size legislation.

5. Shared Responsibility: Where a child lives with separated parents who have shared responsibility, each for part of the week, the address at which the child is ordinarily resident will be considered to be the address that the child lives at for most of the week (excluding weekends and school holidays). Both parents must provide evidence in writing to confirm the child's living arrangements at the time of the application.
 - a. In cases where the child spends an equal proportion of the school week with both parents, evidence of the main contact address will be required to support the application. Both parents must agree in writing which address is to be used as the 'ordinarily resident' address. This address will then be used when processing all school preferences expressed. It is not acceptable to use one address for one school preference and another address for another school preference.