SCHOOL ADMISSIONS POLICY

2024/2025 Academic Year

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Headteacher

1. Glossary of Terms

1.1 “the LA” means Wakefield Metropolitan District Council acting in its capacity as local authority.

1.2 ”the LA area” means the area in respect of which LA is the local authority.

1.3 “school” means a community school, or voluntary controlled school. Community special schools are not covered by the policy.

1.4 “specified year” means the school year beginning at or around the beginning of September 2024.

1.5 “admission authority” in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the LA. The Governing Bodies of foundation (trust) and voluntary aided schools are the admission authorities for those schools. The Secretary of State is the admission authority for Academies.

1.6 “admission arrangements” means the arrangements for a particular school or academy which govern the procedures and the decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to the school or academy.

2. Admissions to Rooks Nest Academy

2.1 The policy on admissions to Rook’s Nest Academy is determined by the academy’s governing body. The administration of admissions is the responsibility of the School Admissions Team within the Children and Young People Service.

3. Admissions to Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

3.1 The policy on admissions to community and voluntary controlled schools are determined by the Council following consultation with governing bodies. The administration of admissions is the responsibility of the School Admissions Team within the Children and Young People’s Service.

4. Expressing a Preference

4.1 In the case of applications for admission to primary, infant and junior schools (including academies) within the Wakefield area, applications from Wakefield residents should be made on Wakefield’s Common Application Form. Attendance at a nursery unit or co-located children’s centre attached to a primary/infant school or part-time attendance at a school below compulsory school age does not guarantee a place at that school or academy. Applications for these part time places must be made separately to the school/centre concerned and are covered by the school’s separate part-time admissions policy. A separate application must then be made to the LA for a compulsory aged school place in line with the requirements of the Primary Co-ordination Scheme.

4.2 For admission to secondary schools (including academies), applications from Wakefield residents should be made on Wakefield’s Common Application Form.

4.3 Applications, at any time, from residents outside the Wakefield District should be made in accordance with the applicants "home" LA's Common Application Form.

4.4 Repeat applications made for entry to the same year group at the same school or academy will not be considered unless there has been a material change in circumstances since the original application. School Admissions will determine if there has been a material change in circumstances since the original application. Examples of a material change include a change of address. Where information was known at the time of the original application, or appeal, but parents chose not to use it, this information will not be considered as additional information or a change in circumstances.

4.5 Where parents submit a Common Application Form under a Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme, whether in the normal admissions round or in-year, which names Rook's Nest Academy, the application will be treated equally against any other school named and eligibility for a school place at Rook's Nest Academy will be decided in accordance with this Admissions Policy.

4.6 Where parents submit a Common Application Form under a Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme, whether in the normal admissions round or in-year, which names more than one community or voluntary controlled school, all applications will be treated equally and eligibility for a school place will be decided in accordance with the LA's Admissions Policy.

5. The Admissions Policy

5.1 If the number of preferences received for a school does not exceed the Admission Number, all preferences will be met (see explanatory note 16.1).

5.2 All applications received will be considered in the following order:

1. Applications received by the closing date in the normal admissions round;

- For primary applications the closing date is **15 January 2024**.

2. For late applications received between the closing date for the normal admissions round and the end of the summer term the following date will apply:

- Applications for primary places received up to and including **14 February 2024** will be accepted as if they had been received by the closing date.

5.3 Applications received after these dates will be regarded as late applications and will be considered after all applications received on time.

5.4 If there are more applications for Rook's Nest Academy than there are places available, preferences will be given in the following order:

(a) Looked after Children, all previously Looked after Children and Children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in care as a result of being adopted.

This refers to children who are:

- Subject to a care order made by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 – for the courts to grant a care order they have to be satisfied that a child is suffering or would suffer 'significant harm' without one;
- Children who are accommodated by the Local Authority on a voluntary basis under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989;
- Children who have been adopted from Local Authority care, children who are subject to a Child Arrangements Order and those with special guardianship immediately following being Looked After will all be included within the higher priority for Looked after Children;
- A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society (see section 23ZZA (8) of the Children Act 1989 (inserted by section 4 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017) (see explanatory note 16.5).

(b) (i) Children who live in Rook's Nest Academy's catchment area, who have brothers and sisters attending Rook's Nest Academy at the time of admission (see explanatory note 16.3);

(b) (ii) Other children who live in Rook's Nest Academy's catchment area (see explanatory note 16.2);

(c) Children who have brothers or sisters in attendance at Rook's Nest Academy (see explanatory note 16.3);

(d) Other children, with priority being given to those who have attended Rook's Nest Academy's Lower Foundation Stage Unit at the time of application;

(e) Other children, with priority being given to those living nearest to Rook's Nest Academy.

5.5 In all categories "live" means the child's permanent home address. A child is normally regarded as living with a parent or guardian and the LA will use the parent or guardian's address for admission purposes. An applicant cannot lodge a child with a friend or relation in order to gain a place at Rook's Nest Academy.

5.6 In all categories, when decisions have to be made between children satisfying the same criterion, children living nearest to Rook's Nest Academy, measured as the crow flies, have priority. The distance measured will be from the central (centroid) point of the applicant's property to the central (centroid) point of Rook's Nest Academy's ground. Measurement will be made using the LA's in-house admissions system and mapping software.

5.7 Where there is more than one application from a postal address contained within a block of flats, places will be decided by random allocation.

5.8 If two or more pupils live equidistant from Rook's Nest Academy, the distance each pupil lives by road from the preferred school will be measured and the place offered to the pupil who lives nearest by this means. In the event of this being equal, places will then be decided by random allocation.

5.9 Where the admission of siblings from a multiple birth (eg twins, triplets) would cause Rook's Nest Academy to rise above its Planned Admission Number (PAN), all of the children from the multiple birth will be admitted.

5.10 In the case of infant classes, where the admission of children from a multiple birth would result in the PAN rising above 30 (or multiples of 30), the additional child/children will be regarded as an 'exception' to the Infant Class Size legislation throughout the infant phase or until the number in the year group reduces to the PAN.

5.11 For admissions purposes only one address can be used as a child's permanent address. Where a child resides with more than one parent/carer, at different addresses, the LA will use the preference expressed by the parent/carer at the address where the child lives the majority of the time during the school week as the main place of residence.

5.12 Children will be placed in the appropriate category depending upon their circumstances at the closing date for receiving applications for admissions to Rook's Nest Academy. Changes in address will be accepted in accordance with the provisions of the Primary Co-ordination Scheme. In cases where there is an anticipated change in circumstances, documentary evidence will be required.

5.13 In the event of any category being over-subscribed, places will be offered in the order of priority (a)-(e) above.

6. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan

6.1 Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan are dealt with under a different mechanism. Any child with a school named on their statement or Plan will automatically gain a place at the school named in the statement or Plan via the statementing process. Any child with a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plan who is admitted to a mainstream community/voluntary controlled school/academy will be counted against the school's/academy's admission number.

6.2 Special Educational Needs is a term used if a child has difficulty accessing the curriculum, which may mean that he/she may need to have some form of specialist provision made for them in order to learn. It may be a general learning difficulty, an emotional, behavioural, sensory or physical disability or it may be a difficulty related to communication or speech and language. Further information can be obtained from the Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review Team or the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS).

7. The Offer of a Place at a school/academy

7.1 Decisions will be posted 2nd class to parents on the following day:

Primary, Infant and Junior Schools: **16 April 2024**

7.2 Parents who have applied electronically will be able to access their offer of a school place or a place at an academy via the on-line website after 12.00 midnight on the respective offer date.

8. Point of Entry

8.1 For junior and secondary schools, pupils will start school in the in-take year (ie Y7 for secondary schools and Y3 for junior schools) on the first day the school is open following 1 September 2024.

8.2 For infant/primary schools, those pupils with a date of birth between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020 will start school on the first day the school is open following 1 September 2024.

8.3 These arrangements do not apply to those pupils being admitted for nursery provision including nursery provision in a co-located children's centre (see explanatory note 16.6).

9. Deferred Entry to Primary Schools

9.1 Where the LA offers a place at a primary or infant school, a parent who accepts that school place can defer entry to that school until the term after the child's fifth birthday. There may be spring and summer term admissions as a result of parents who have deferred their child's entry.

9.2 Any deferred place at the school will be held for that child and will not be available to be offered to another child and the deferred place must be taken up during the same school year for which the offer of the school place was made and accepted. Entry to a school cannot be deferred to the next academic year or beyond the beginning of the term following the child's fifth birthday, these types of request are dealt with under section 10 below.

9.3 Parents can also request that their child attends school part-time instead of full time until the child reaches statutory school age. Schools must accommodate such requests where it appears to be in the best interest of the child.

10. Admission of Children Outside their Normal Age Group

10.1 Parents can seek school places outside their normal age group. Parents must make an application for their child's normal age group at the usual time however a separate request must also be made at the same time for admission out of the normal age group.

10.2 A decision on these types of applications will be made by the Local Authority and Headteacher based on the individual circumstances of the request based on the information provided by the parents.

10.3 Where the decision is to refuse the request there is no right of appeal if the child is offered a place in another year group in the school/academy.

11. Unsuccessful Applications

11.1 If a Wakefield pupil is not successful in securing a place at any school/academy he/she has preferenced a school place will be allocated in accordance with the Wakefield Co-ordinated Admission Arrangement Scheme.

11.2 Any parent whose child is not offered a school place or a place at an academy for which they have expressed a preference has the right to an independent appeal panel.

12. Waiting Lists

12.1 Pupils will be added to the waiting lists of a community, voluntary controlled schools and academy where they were refused a place in accordance with the provisions of the Primary Co-ordination Scheme or In-Year Co-ordination Scheme. All waiting lists will be re-ranked when new applications have been added.

12.2 Places will be allocated from the waiting list when the number of pupils in the relevant year group falls below the admission number for that school. Waiting lists will be kept in strict priority order against the Admissions Policy above.

13. In-Year Admissions

13.1 All applications made outside the normal admissions round (ie in-year applications) for community, voluntary controlled schools or an academy should be made on the Wakefield Common Application Form, which is available from the School Admissions Team. Applications will be processed in accordance with the "In Year Co-ordination Scheme". Parents can express up to 5 school/academy preferences.

13.2 Where there are sufficient places, an application will normally be agreed. The Admission Number for Rook's Nest Academy is set for the academy's in-take year. As a general rule, this admission number then remains with that year group as it moves through the academy. There may be exceptions, for example, if accommodation in the academy is removed, then the admission number may change for subsequent year groups.

13.3 If a place is not available, a refusal letter is sent outlining the rights of appeal. If the application is from a Wakefield resident then a place will be allocated at the next nearest community, voluntary controlled school or academy with places. Should the child be already attending a Wakefield school then no school will be offered as an alternative. The child's name will be added to the waiting list for Rook's Nest Academy in the order against the Admissions Policy above. Should a vacancy arise at Rook's Nest Academy, the place will be offered to the child at the top of the waiting list.

14. Fair Access Protocol

14.1 The LA has agreed a Fair Access Protocol with its primary and secondary schools (including academies). This means that, in some circumstances, pupils defined in the Protocol will have a higher priority for admission to schools and/or year groups which are already full than all other pupils seeking admission to that school. Full details of the Protocol can be obtained from the LA.

15. False Information

15.1 Any place offered on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application, eg giving a false address, will be withdrawn. It is for the parents or guardian to satisfy the LA of their circumstances, as they apply to the admission criteria at the time of the application.

16. Explanatory Notes

16.1 **Admission Numbers**

Each maintained school has an Admission Number (AN) for each "relevant age" group. Each year, the LA consults with the Governing Body of the school/academy before the AN is set. In the case of year of entry, a child may not normally be refused admission to a school on the grounds of prejudice to efficient education or the efficient use of resources unless the number of applications for admission exceeds the admission number, or a child is offered a school or academy which is ranked higher on a Common Application Form under the respective Co-ordinated Admissions Policy.

16.2 **Catchment Areas**

The LA believes it is important that schools and academies should serve their local communities and so each one has its own catchment area. However, parents are required to express a preference, stating their choice of school, even if this is the catchment area school/academy.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that there will be a place for every child in its catchment area school, it cannot be guaranteed that this will always be the case.

If parents are in any doubt about the catchment area school for the area in which they live, they need to contact their local school or the School Admissions Team at Wakefield Council, Room 42, County Hall, Wakefield, WF1 2QL. Further information is also available for parents in the Primary Guide for Parents.

The home addresses of some pupils may fall into an area that forms part of the catchment area of two schools (this is known as an Option area). Where a pupil's address falls within two catchment areas, the LA will consider the application as children who live in the catchment area for both schools.

16.3 **Brothers and Sisters**

This category includes children with brothers or sisters (including step-brothers or sisters residing at the same address) of statutory school age, living at the same address, in attendance at the same school/academy, or a school/academy on the same site, on the date of admission.

16.4 **Families Living Outside the District Boundary**

Children from families living outside the Wakefield Metropolitan District boundary will be considered alongside those who live within the Wakefield Metropolitan District.

16.5 **Children in Care**

This refers to children who are:

- Subject to a care order made by the courts under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 – for the courts to grant a care order they have to be satisfied that a child is suffering or would suffer 'significant harm' without one;
- Children who are accommodated by the local authority on a voluntary basis under section 20 of the Children Act 1989;

- Children who have been adopted from local authority care, children with a residency order and those with special guardianship immediately following being Looked After will be included within the higher priority for Looked After children; and
- Children who are regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society (see section 23ZZA (8) of the Children Act 1989 (inserted by section 4 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017).

16.6 **Points of Entry**

Parents of children who are admitted for nursery provision must apply for a place at the school or academy if they want their child to transfer to reception class.

Attendance at nursery or co-located children's centre does not guarantee admission to school or academy.

16.7 **Deferment for summer born children**

- If the child's 5th birthday is between 1 April and 31 August, then they must start school no later than the following September. Parents of summer born children are currently able to request that their child defer entry to a reception class for a full academic year.

- If the request is allowed, normal admission rules will apply and there is no guarantee that a place will be offered at the requested school(s).

- Parents should set out their reasons for their request in writing to the School Admissions Team, Room 42, County Hall, Wakefield, WF1 2QL during the autumn term after their third birthday. This will ensure that they do not miss out on a place at the normal point of entry. Such requests should be made by the closing date – 14 February 2024.