

Admissions Policy

– updated to include admission arrangements for 2021-22 for schools in the Stephen Sutton Multi-Academy Trust

This policy applies across all partner schools in the Stephen Sutton Multi-Academy Trust (SSMAT). It is available on the SSMAT website, accessible from our schools' websites and available, on request, from the school offices.

POLICY APPROVAL and REVIEW

Review date: ***Dec. '20***

Approval needed by: ***Full Trust Board***

Adopted: ***Dec. '19***

Next review date: ***Dec. '21***

1. Responsibilities

- 1.1 Within the remit of this Trust-wide policy, The Stephen Sutton Multi-Academy Trust (SSMAT) Board delegates the responsibility for managing admissions of students to the Local Governing Body (LGB) of the school concerned.

2. Planned Admission Numbers (PANs)

- 2.1 As it operates as its own admission authority, SSMAT is not required to consult on the PANs for its partner schools unless it proposes to decrease the PAN.
- 2.2 In the circumstances where the Trust proposes to decrease the PAN of one of its schools, it must ensure that a consultation process is put in place that runs for a minimum of six weeks, within the period 1 October and 31 January of the academic year that precedes the implementation of the change in PAN in September for applications made in the next academic year.
- 2.3 Within two weeks of their determination, the PAN for each partner school will be established by the end of February and published on the websites of the partner schools and (when available) the Trust (displayed for the whole of the offer year).
- 2.4 When a PAN is increased, specific reference must be made to the change on school and (when available) Trust websites.
- 2.5 **2022/23 PANs for partner schools:
Chase Terrace Academy – 270**

3. Oversubscription Criteria

- 3.1 Although parents have the right to express a preference for the school / nursery that they wish their child to attend, there is no guarantee of success in gaining that place. It is the Trust's policy to aim to satisfy parental preference, where possible and within the limits of statutory requirements. In some cases, there may be more applications for a particular partner school / nursery than the number of places available.
- 3.2 If the total number of preferences for admission to a partner school or nursery exceeds the number of available places, then the following order of priority will be used by the relevant Local Governing Body to allocate the available places:
 - i) Children in Care, and children who ceased to be in care because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order). [Children in Care means children who, at the time of making the application, are in the care of, or provided with accommodation by, a local authority in accordance with section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989.]
 - ii) Young people who satisfy both of Tests 1 and 2, as described below:

Test 1: The young person is distinguished from the great majority of other applicants, either on their own individual medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances. Medical grounds must be supported by a medical report (obtained by the applicant and provided at the point of application). This report must clearly justify, for health reasons only, why it is better for the young person's health to attend the preferred SSMAT partner school / nursery. Exceptional circumstances must relate to the choice of school / nursery and the individual young person, i.e. the circumstances of the young person, rather than the specific economic or social circumstances of the parent/carer, and be supported by a professional report (obtained by the applicant and provided at the point of application), e.g. a report from a social worker, justifying why it is better for the young person to attend the preferred SSMAT partner school / nursery, rather than any other school / nursery.

Test 2: The young person would suffer hardship if they were unable to attend the preferred SSMAT partner school / nursery. Hardship means severe suffering of any kind, not merely difficulty or inconvenience, which is likely to be experienced as a result of the young person attending a different school. Applicants must provide detailed information about both the type and severity of any likely hardship at the time of application.

- iii) Children who have an elder brother or sister in attendance at the preferred partner school / nursery and who will still be attending the school /nursery at the time of the proposed admission date. (For admission purposes, a brother or sister is a child who lives at the same address as the applicant and either: has one or both natural parents in common with the applicant; is related to the applicant by a parent's marriage; is adopted or fostered by a common parent; or is unrelated to the applicant but lives at the same address, with parents who live as partners.)
- iv) Children living within the defined catchment area for the partner school / nursery. Cluster areas for nursery age settings will sometimes, but not always, correspond to the catchment area for the school to which they are attached.
- v) Other children, arranged in order of priority according to how near their home addresses are to the main gate of the partner school / nursery, determined by a straight-line measurement, as calculated using the Local Authority's Geographical Information System.

3.3 Where it is not possible to accommodate all children applying for places within a particular category, then the Local Governing Body will allocate the available places in accordance with the remaining criteria.

4. Additional Notes – General

4.1 Local Authorities coordinate applications in the normal admissions round. Each young person receives one offer of a place at a maintained school. In accordance with legislation, children who have a statutory statement of special educational need or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that names a particular school as being the most appropriate to meet

the child's needs must be admitted to that school. This reduces the amount of places available to other applicants.

- 4.2 Copies of catchment area maps are available from the relevant SSMAT partner school / nursery.
- 4.3 There is no charge relating to the admission of a child to a SSMAT partner school /nursery.
- 4.4 It is the applicant's responsibility to provide any supportive information required in order for the application to be assessed against the published admissions criteria, the Local Governing Body will not seek to obtain this information on behalf of the applicant.
- 4.5 The Local Authority's Geographical Information System (GIS) (or similar system) will be used to calculate home to school distances in miles. The measurement is calculated using Ordnance Survey (OS) data from an applicant's home address to the main front gate of the school. The coordinates of an applicant's home address are determined and provided by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and OS Address Point data.
- 4.6 The home address is considered to be the young person's (and their parent's/carer's) main and genuine principal place of residence at the time of the allocation of places, i.e. where they normally live. If a child is resident with friends or relatives (for reasons other than legal guardianship), the friends' or relatives' address will not be considered for allocation purposes. If a child's home address changes during the admissions process, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the Local Governing Body immediately. Where there is a proposed house move taking place during the admissions process, the Local Governing Body will only accept the revised address for the purposes of allocating places, where parents/carers can provide documentary evidence of the move by the end of the February preceding the September start date. It will be necessary for sufficient evidence of a permanent move to be provided to the school by this date in order for the new information be taken into account, for allocation purposes. If a place is offered on the basis of an address that is subsequently found to be different from the young person's normal and permanent home address at the time of allocation of places, then that place is likely to be withdrawn.
- 4.7 Where parents have shared responsibility for a young person, who lives with each parent for part of the school week, parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes. It is expected that parents will agree on school places before an application is made, and it may be necessary to request evidence to confirm that this is the case. The Local Governing Body is not in a position to intervene in disputes between parents over school applications and will request that these are resolved privately.
- 4.8 Where there are a limited number of spaces available and the Local Governing Body cannot distinguish between applicants using the criteria listed, such as in the case of young people who live in the same block of flats or are the result of a multiple birth, then the applicant(s) will be randomly selected. This process will be independently verified by a person nominated by the Trust Board.

- 4.9 Unsuccessful applicants will be placed on a waiting list, in accordance with the oversubscription criteria stated above (and not based on the date their application was received). There will be a period of two weeks after the published offer date, during which places that become available will not be reallocated. If places become available after this date, they will be offered according to the priority order of the waiting list. Waiting lists will be kept until the end of the autumn term of admission. Inclusion on a SSMAT partner school / nursery waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available. A young person's position on a waiting list is subject to change during the year, since each name added to the list, or deleted from it, will require the list to be ranked again, in line with the oversubscription criteria. Children who are subject of a direction by a local authority to admit, or who are allocated to a school in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol, will take precedence over those on the waiting list.
- 4.10 Preferences received after the closing date will be considered alongside applications made on time, wherever possible. Where this is not practicable, because places have already been allocated, or are shortly to be allocated, then late preferences will be considered only after those that were made before this point. A late application does not affect the right of appeal or the right to be placed on a school's waiting list.
- 4.11 Parents do not have the right to a second appeal, in respect of the same school for the same academic year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the appellant has made a second application because of a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school and has again been refused admission.

5. Additional Notes – Nursery Applications

- 5.1 There is no statutory right of appeal for admission to a SSMAT nursery. Any disputes over the administration of the policy will be dealt with through the Trust's complaints procedure.
- 5.2 Attendance at a particular nursery setting will not guarantee admission to any particular Reception class or give any advantage to the child's application for Reception. Parents must make a separate application, in accordance with legislation.

6. Additional Notes – Primary School Applications

- 6.1 Full time places in Reception classes will be available in the September of the academic year within which the child becomes five years old.
- 6.2 Parents may request that their child be admitted to Reception Class on a part-time basis, or that their child be admitted to school later in the same academic year, until the child reaches compulsory school age (i.e. beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday). In these circumstances, the Reception place will be held for the child. Before deciding whether, or not, to defer their child's entry to school, parents are encouraged to visit their preferred school(s) to clarify how they cater for the youngest children in Reception and how the needs of these children are met as they move up through the school.
- 6.3 An infant class (a class where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year) is limited, by regulations made under Sec. 1 of the School Standards and Framework Act, to 30 pupils per school teacher. Where an application is refused on the basis

that to do so would breach the infant class size limit and there are no measures that could be taken to avoid this without prejudicing the provision of effective education or efficient use of resources, an appeal may be made on the grounds that: the class size limit was not, in fact, breached; the admission arrangements did not comply with admissions law; or the decision was not one that a 'reasonable' admissions authority would make. [In this context, 'unreasonable' would mean that the decision was 'perverse in light of the admission arrangements']

- 6.4 For cases where a child is placed on a primary school waiting list, where the infant class size regulations apply, the waiting list will operate until the cohort concerned leaves Year 2 and parents will be written to each year to ask whether or not they wish their child's details to remain on the list.

7. Additional Notes – Sixth Form Applications

- 7.1 Applications for admission to the Sixth Form of a SSMAT partner secondary school will be handled by the partner school. The school will provide detailed information on the admission procedure, including minimum entry requirements for entry into the Sixth Form and to study particular courses. Minimum entry requirements are the same for internal and external applicants. Consistent with statutory guidelines, interviews are not used as a means of selection, although meetings will be held to provide advice on options and entry requirements for particular courses. Entry to the Sixth Form is not dependent on attendance, behaviour record or perceptions of attitude or motivation.

8. Admission Outside of the Normal Age Group

- 8.1 Parents may seek to apply for their child's admission to school outside of their normal age group, for example if the child is exceptionally gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of summer born children may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted outside of their normal age group to Reception rather than Year 1. These parents will need to make an application alongside children applying at the normal age, which should explain why it is in the child's best interest to be admitted outside of their normal age. Evidence from professionals could be included to support the case. A decision as to whether, or not, this is an appropriate course of action will be made by the Local Governing Body of the partner school / nursery concerned. Parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular year group.

9. 'In-Year' Applications

- 9.1 Parents / carers seeking to move their child to a Stephen Sutton Multi-Academy Trust (SSMAT) partner school / nursery (from another school / nursery setting) may make an application using the appropriate application form, which can be obtained from the relevant SSMAT school / nursery. This application will be processed in line with the procedure outlined in the determined admission arrangements. Parents / carers are responsible for ensuring that their child continues to receive appropriate education in the interim period while the application is considered and, where successful, arrangements are being made. The Local Authority will be informed of all in-year applications and their outcomes.

9.2 SSMAT partner schools participate fully in locally agreed Fair Access Protocols.

9.3 Parents are entitled to appeal against the refusal of a place, through an in-year application.

Stuart Jones; Dec. '20