

# ADMISSIONS POLICY

## 2022 - 2023

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## Introduction

- a) Paxton Academy is part of the Wandle Learning Trust (“The Trust”) who is the admissions authority. The Academy participates in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by the Local Authority.
- b) The Trust will act in accordance with, and will ensure that an Independent Appeal Panel is trained to act in accordance with all relevant provisions of the School Admissions Code and the Schools Admission Appeals Code published by the Department for Education (“the Codes”) as they apply at any given time to maintained schools. For this purpose, reference in the Codes or legislation to “admission authorities” shall be deemed to be references to the governing body of the Trust.
- c) The Academy welcomes visits from parents and children before application and will be as flexible as possible to accommodate parents. Please contact Paxton Academy reception to arrange a time to look around the school with a senior leader.

## 2. Published Admission Number (PAN)

Paxton Academy will admit 90 children to Reception each year. At capacity, the school roll will be 630 pupils (excluding nursery). The governors will keep this number under review.

## 3. Aims and objectives

- a) The Trustees of Wandle Learning Trust are responsible for pupil admissions and are committed to providing an excellent education for a fully comprehensive, non-selective intake.
- b) The Admissions policy is written to reflect the inclusiveness of our Academy in meeting the diverse needs of children in the local community.
- c) All applications will be treated on merit, and in a sensitive manner.
- d) A child’s level of ability is irrelevant to this school’s Admissions policy, as are any special needs a child may have.

## 4. How parents and carers can apply for their child to be admitted to Paxton Academy

- a) The Trust determines the admission arrangements in agreement with the local authority’s published Admissions Code. Parents and carers can receive a copy of these regulations directly from the Local Authority (LA).
- b) The LA’s annual admissions prospectus informs parents and carers how to apply for a place at the school of their choice. Parents and carers have a right to express their preference, but this does not, in itself, guarantee a place at that particular school. Applications should be made by completing a form that can be obtained from the local authority admissions department or via the e-admissions portal and should be returned by the date stipulated. The LA will notify parents and carers of the decision as soon as all the applications have been considered. Following this, if successful, Paxton Academy will confirm the offer in writing. Parents will be required to inform the LA whether they wish to accept or decline the offer within a specified time scale.
- c) The Trust will consider all applications for places at the Academy. Where fewer than the published admission numbers are received, Paxton Academy will offer places to all those who have applied.
- d) The Academy will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. However, following the offer and acceptance of a place, parents can defer the date that their child takes up their place, or decide that their child will attend school part-time, until their child reaches five - the statutory school age - or (for children born between 1 April and 31 August) until the beginning of the summer term of that academic year, without their child losing their place.
- e) The only restriction we place on entry is that of number. If the number of children applying for entry exceeds the places available, we adopt the over-subscription rule set out below to determine whether a child is to be accepted or not. It is our wish for parents and carers to find a place for their child at the school of their choice. However, this is not always possible, due to excess demand on the places available.

## 5. Admission of Summer Born Children Outside their Normal Age Range

Where children are born between 1 April and 31 August, (generally referred to as 'summer born children') parents may decide that they want to delay their child starting school until the September after the child has reached compulsory school age on 31 August. Nevertheless, any place already obtained for the child in Reception year in the usual way cannot be held for that child for the duration of that school year, and parents will need to re-apply for admission the following year. Such applications will be considered in the usual way along with all other applications, applying the oversubscription criteria for that year as necessary. As a place can not be held for their child in Reception year, parents should keep under consideration the possibility that there may not be any available places in Year 1 the following year.

Parents of summer born children may request that their child is admitted the following year outside of his or her normal age range into Reception year instead of Year 1, however there is no automatic right to this. The Trust will make a decision, having taken into account the circumstances of each case on a case by case basis. Where the request is agreed by the Trust, the application will be considered with all applications in the usual way, applying the oversubscription criteria as necessary.

The procedure for parents of summer born children wanting to defer entry into Reception Year for one school year is set out further below under 'Admission of Children Outside their Normal Age Group'.

## 6. Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs

Paxton Academy will admit all children with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) where the Academy is named on the EHCP.

## 7. Late Applications

Any application forms received after the closing date, set by the LA will be considered late applications and will be dealt with after all applications received on time.

## 8. Offer of places

a) If your application has been successful, you will be informed in writing. No information will be provided to applicants over the telephone.

b) Applicants to whom places are offered will be required to return a reply slip to the academy within the stated time and to inform the LA of their decision whether to accept or reject the offer by the date set out by the Local Authority (check the Croydon Council's Website).

c) Parents/carers can request that their child attends on a part-time basis until they reach compulsory school age, or that the date that their child is admitted is deferred until later in the academic year in which the child reaches compulsory school age (see below).

## 9. Appeals Procedure

a) Unsuccessful applicants will be given an opportunity to appeal against the decision to an Independent Appeals Panel set up in accordance with the statutory provisions in force at the time.

b) The determination of the Appeals Panel will be binding on all parties in accordance with the Schools Admissions Appeal Code December 2014.

c) Full details of the appeals process will be sent to unsuccessful applicants with the decision letter.

Where a child is not successful in achieving an offer of a place, the child's parents will be told the reason why admission was refused and that they are entitled to appeal to an independent admission appeal panel within a specified amount of time under the provisions of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The academy will provide information

to parents about the appeals process and provide the parents with a named contact who can answer any enquiries they may have about the appeals process. Parents lodging an appeal must set out the grounds of the appeal in writing.

The Admission Appeal Panel will be independent of the academy. The academy has agreed with the Local Authority for them to deal with the administrative side of arranging admission appeal hearings for the academy.

The determination of the Admission Appeal Panel will be made in accordance with the Schools Admission Appeals Code 2012 and will be binding on all parties.

#### **10. Restrictions on Infant Class Sizes**

The statutory maximum number of pupils within a class in Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2 is 30 pupils.

There are, however, statutory exceptions to this rule, including children with a statement of special educational needs/education health and care plan which names the school, looked after and previously looked after children admitted outside of the normal admission round, children of UK services personnel admitted outside of the normal admission round, and twins and siblings from a multiple birth. Children falling into these categories may be admitted over the statutory maximum class size of 30 pupils without breaching the regulations, in which case they will be an “excepted pupil” until the class size falls back to 30 pupils.

The statutory maximum class size does not apply to Years 3 to 6.

#### **11. Waiting List**

a) In addition to the right to appeal, a waiting list is held for the first term of the reception year, and thereafter applicants are required to complete the local authority in-year application form if they wish to remain on the waiting list. In-year waiting lists are held for one academic year and applicants are required to re-apply for each academic year.

b) Where places become vacant, applicants on the waiting list will be ranked in accordance with the oversubscription criteria (see below) and the place allocated to the next child on the waiting list.

#### **12. Over-subscription Criteria**

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admission number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below.

##### ***Priority 1- Looked After and Previously Looked After Children***

Children in public care, or children who were Looked After, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).

A “Looked After” is a child in public care at the date on which the application is made. A “Previously Looked After” child is a child who was in public care, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order immediately after being in public care.

An application under this priority must be supported by the relevant Local Authority Children’s Services Department. In the case of a Previously Looked After child, a copy of the adoption or special guardianship order must also be supplied.

##### ***Priority 2- Children attending the nursery at Paxton Academy (when in place)\*\****

##### ***Priority 3- Children with a sibling at the Academy***

Children with a sibling attending the Academy at the time of admission who live at the same main residence. Sibling ~~means a full, step, half, adopted or fostered brother or sister, but not cousin, who will be living permanently with them~~ at the same residence at the date of their entry to the Academy; the Academy Trust may require proof of relationship.

#### ***Priority 4- Children with Medical needs requiring Admission to This Academy Only***

Children for whom it is essential to be admitted to this Academy because of special circumstances to do with significant medical, social, pastoral or psychological needs evidenced by written professional advice (including relevant Local Authority Children's Services Department), explaining why these needs can realistically only be met by Paxton Academy. Decisions relating to admissions based on these needs will be made by the Academy Trust following advice from the Admissions Panel and in consultation with an appropriately qualified professional who is deemed expert in the particular field concerned.

#### ***Priority 5- Children of Staff***

Children of staff in the following circumstances:

In subsequent years where they have been employed at the Academy for two or more years, at the time at which the application for admission to the Academy is made.

- After places have been filled under the above five priorities, offers will be made for the remaining places, determined by random allocation from the waiting list. The random allocation process will be supervised by an independent body.
- **\*\* Applications for any transfer from nursery to Reception must be made via the Local Authority in the usual way.**

#### ***Priority 6- Distance***

Priority will be given to pupils living closest to the academy as measured in a straight line.

Where there are more applications in Priority 6 above than there are places, we will operate a lottery system where names are randomly drawn by an independent witness.

#### **13. The Child's Main Home Address**

The address given on the application form must be the child's main home address, which will usually be the address at which Child Benefit is claimed or if there is no entitlement to Child Benefit, then the address at which the child is registered with their GP will be used. A business address or the address of a parent with whom the child does not live, a relative or a child minder must not be given.

Where a child lives for part of the week with each parent separately, their main home address will be deemed to be the address at which the child lives for 51% or more of their time from Monday to Friday during school term times. Where there is a dispute over which address is the child's main home address, the address at which Child Benefit is claimed or if there is no entitlement to Child Benefit, then the address at which the child is registered with their GP will be deemed to be their main home address.

#### **14. Distance from the Academy**

The distance will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address to the designated entrance(s) of the school using a computerised measuring system (GIS) and geographical reference points as provided by the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG). Those living closer to the school will receive higher priority. If a child lives in a shared property such as flats, the geographical references will determine the start point within the property boundaries to be used for distance calculation purposes.

#### **15. Twins and Children from Multiple Births**

Where a child who is a twin or a child from a multiple birth has achieved a place in the usual way, but there are no places remaining to admit their twin or siblings from a multiple birth, the academy will admit the twin or siblings from a multiple birth over and above the academy's published admission number (PAN). In those cases, those additional children admitted over the PAN will be admitted as "excepted pupils" and will not count towards the statutory maximum class size.

## **16. Children of UK Service Personnel and other Crown Servants**

The academy will treat an application for admission of a child from a UK armed forces family with a confirmed posting to the academy's area, or from a crown servant family returning from overseas to live in the academy's area, as if they live in the area of the academy even if a residential address has not been identified at the date of the application.

The application must be supported by a letter from the relevant government department (for example, the Ministry of Defence, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office or Government Communications Headquarters) indicating the likely address of the unit or quarters, for the purpose of applying the academy's oversubscription criteria.

For further information, please contact The Children's Education Advisory Service.

## **17. In Year Admission and Applications to Other Year Groups**

Paxton Academy participates in the LA's co-ordinated in year admissions scheme and follow the protocol set within it. Applications for admission to year groups other than Reception Year, and applications for in-year admission, must be made directly to the Council. Paxton Academy will arrange for the Principal or Deputy Principal to meet with parents wishing to make an in-year application. Once the application has been received, if there are no places available within the relevant year group, the child's name will be added to the waiting list in accordance with the procedure set out below.

## **18. Applications for Admission of Children Outside their Normal Age Group**

It is the expectation of Paxton Academy that a child is educated alongside his/her age equivalent peers, in almost all cases.

Parents who want their child to be admitted outside of their normal age group for any reason (for example, because their child is gifted or talented and they want their child to be admitted to the year above their normal age group, or because their child has experienced problems such as ill health and they want their child to be admitted below their normal age group), may do so by attaching their written request to their application for admission, setting out in detail their reasons for making the request and attaching documentation from medical, health, educational or other professionals who support the request.

In the case of summer born children (i.e. those born between 1 April and 31 August) seeking to delay starting school for one school year and then to be admitted into Reception Year below their normal age group, an application for admission into Reception Year with the child's normal age group should be made in the usual way accompanied by a request to be admitted into Reception Year the following year with supporting evidence, as set out above.

The request will be considered by the academy on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child to whom the request relates. The academy will take into account the following:

- parents' views
- the views of the Principal of the academy
- information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- the child's medical history and the views of the child's medical or health professionals (where relevant)
- whether the child has previously been educated outside of his or her normal age group
- whether the child would naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely

Parents should therefore take these factors into account when writing their request and considering what supporting documentation to attach to their request.

Where the academy agrees to a request for admission of a child outside of his or her normal age group, the academy will write to the parents confirming the decision and clearly setting out the reasons for it. The application for admission will then be considered with all other applications in the usual way, applying the oversubscription criteria as necessary. The academy will not discriminate against a child because it has been agreed that they may be admitted outside of their normal age group.

In the case of summer born children seeking to delay starting school for one school year and then being admitted into Reception Year, the agreement to the request will close their application for admission to Reception Year with their normal age range, and a new application for admission into Reception Year will need to be made the following year accompanied by a copy of the letter confirming the decision of the academy. That application will not receive priority over other applications, and will be considered with all other applications in the usual way, applying the oversubscription criteria as necessary. This means that, although the parents may have obtained the academy's agreement to their child being admitted below its normal age range into Reception Year one school year after being eligible to start school, their child may not achieve a place in Reception Year at the academy the following year.

Where the academy refuses a request for admission of a child outside of his or her normal age group, the academy will write to the parents confirming the decision and clearly setting out the reasons for it. The application for admission into the child's normal age group will then be considered in the usual way, applying the oversubscription criteria as necessary. Parents do not have a statutory right to appeal, if their child's application for a place outside his or her normal age group is unsuccessful.

#### Notes

The Academy Trust is committed to the inclusion of all children within the local community and will therefore consult and coordinate its arrangements including the rapid re-integration of children who have been excluded from other schools and who arrive in an area after the normal admissions round. This will be in accordance with local in-year fair access protocols for securing schools for unplaced children.

The Academy Trust may refuse admission to applicants who have been permanently excluded from two or more other schools. The ability to refuse admissions runs for a period of two years since the last exclusion. Exclusions which took place before the child concerned reached compulsory school age do not count for this purpose.

Applications for vacancies, that arise outside the normal annual admission round and after the waiting list has closed, will be considered at any time during the year. Where there is more than one application for a vacant place, the offer of a place will be determined in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Tie-breaker: In the event of two or more applicants tying when any of the admission criteria is applied, positions will be determined by random allocation.

#### 19. Monitoring and review

- a) This policy will be monitored by the Academy Trust, who will always take due note of the guidance provided by the Local Admissions Forum.
- b) The policy will be reviewed each year and changed if necessary to take account of any change in circumstances either within the Academy or in the local area or following direction from the Secretary of State.