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West Hill School

Policy	Admissions Policy for September 2024
Date approved:	12 th December 2022
Approved by:	Admissions Committee
Next review date	Admissions Policy for September 2024

Thompson Cross | Stamford Street | Stalybridge | Cheshire | SK15 1LX

Tel: 0161 338 2193 | Email: admin@westhillschool.co.uk

Applying for a Place at West Hill School for September 2024

The application process is detailed in the Moving On document issued by Tameside LA and is available online at www.tameside.gov.uk/movingon.

All parents who live in Tameside should apply for a place at West Hill School online at www.tameside.gov.uk

If you live outside Tameside you should complete the form from your local authority and this will be forwarded to the school.

The Process

- The Online Application Form will invite parents to name 6 schools as equal preference. In allocating places, West Hill will be part of the equal preference scheme co-ordinated by Tameside Council, details of which can be found in their Moving On document.
- The Online Application Form will give parents the opportunity to indicate their preference for a single sex school.
- There will be a common timetable for all including a single notification date. The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is 31st October. Applications received after this date will be considered after all applications received on time have been processed. This applies even if your child has exceptional medical or social needs, or has a sibling at the school. If your application is late, you may not receive an offer of a school place on National Offer Day.
- No changes to the application form will be allowed after the closing date of 31st October 2023 except in exceptional circumstances. The closing date for submission if there are exceptional circumstances is 10th November 2023. Exceptional circumstances are applied in limited situations, for example, the family has recently moved address. Evidence must be provided to support the request. An intention to change address cannot be considered by the local authority until the move has actually taken place and proof is available, or parents may provide a solicitor's letter confirming an exchange of contracts on a property, or a tenancy agreement. No changes can be considered even where there are exceptional circumstances once information has been exchanged with the other admission bodies by the Council, because the allocations process has commenced. In the case of secondary schools this date is (to be determined).

- The online system will reopen two weeks after the closing date to accept late applications. Late applications will only be dealt with after all of those that have been received on time. This applies even if your child has exceptional medical or social needs, or has a sibling at the school. If your application is late, you may not receive an offer of a school place on National Offer Day.
- The LA will liaise with West Hill over applications. Trustees will apply the school's oversubscription criteria, irrespective of the preference order, and provide the Local Authority with a list of applicants ranked according to the criteria.
- Notification letters containing offers of **a single school place** will be sent out to parents in accordance with the coordinated admissions scheme. This is common with all other LAs nationally. These letters will also inform parents of their right of appeal, and who to contact, if an application to West Hill School has not been successful.
- Parents will not receive multiple offers.
- If the school is oversubscribed the trustees will maintain a waiting list. The waiting list will operate until the end of the autumn term 2024. Parents who have expressed the school as a preference and have not been offered a place at the school or at a higher preference school, will automatically be placed on the waiting list. Other parents who have submitted an appeal or who have opted to go on the list will also be placed on the list. All pupils on the waiting list will be ranked according to the oversubscription criteria. Places will be offered, should any become available, to the highest ranked application received by the date the place becomes available. If new or late applications have a higher priority under the oversubscription criteria, they will be ranked higher than those who have been on the list for some time. A significant change of circumstances, such as a change of address, will be taken into account: evidence must be provided. Children who have been referred under the local authority's Fair Access protocol or who are the subject of a direction by the local authority to admit must be given precedence over any other children on the waiting list.

Admissions Arrangements for West Hill School

The school has an agreed admission number of 170 pupils for entry in year 7. The school will accordingly admit at least 170 pupils in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received. All applicants will be admitted if 170 or fewer apply.

When the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Educational, Health and Care Plan where West Hill School is named in the Plan, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria outlined below (see also 'Moving On' booklet).

ADMISSIONS SEPTEMBER 2024

PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBER: 170

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

If the school receives more applications for places than there are places available, the criteria for over-subscription are applied to determine who should be allocated the places at the school. Children with Educational, Health Care Plans, where West Hill is the named school, will be allocated places before the oversubscription criteria are applied. The criteria for over-subscription for West Hill School are:

1. Looked After Children

This will apply to a 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after, including those children who appear (to the admissions authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of adoption, residence, or special guardianship order. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

2. Children and families with exceptional medical or social needs

Written evidence must be provided from a doctor or other agency that he has exceptional needs which means that admission to West Hill School is essential, reference will normally be made to the Community Health Physician, Social Services, or the Educational Psychologist, as appropriate. Members of the school's Admission Committee will make a decision as to whether to admit a child under this criterion using the evidence provided. All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence. Common childhood medical conditions such as asthma or giving the child's nervousness at starting a new school are unlikely to be accepted as exceptional.

3. **Sibling:** this will apply where there are brothers attending the school at the time of application i.e. the year in which a student is applying for a place into Year 7. Preference will be given to pupils living nearest to the school.*

Children with a sibling attending the school at the time of application.

Sibling is defined in these arrangements as children who live as brothers in the same house, including natural brothers, half brothers, adopted siblings, stepbrothers, foster brothers, the son of the parent/carer's partner and in each case living at the same address. This allows for the admittance of children whose siblings will still be attending the preferred school. In the case where twins, triplets, other multiple birth siblings, or other siblings whose date of birth falls within the same academic year, are split between West Hill and another school when allocations take place, siblings will be offered a place at West Hill, if that is the parents wish.

4. **Children of staff** - this will apply where the 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.
5. **Single sex education** – the Online Application Form allows an expression of a general preference for single sex education. If the school is oversubscribed on this criterion preference will be given to pupils living nearest to the school.*
6. **All other applications on distance.** Preference will be given to pupils living nearest to the school.*

*Where oversubscription occurs in applying criterion 3, 4, 5 or 6, distance will be measured as a straight line from the child's home address, using the address point assigned by the National Land and Property Gazetteer, to the main gate to the school property. Measurements will be made using the local authority's school admissions data mapping software, which employs a Geographical Information System based on Ordnance Survey. The address from which distance will be measured will be the permanent residential address, at the time of application, of the parent with whom the child is normally resident. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week, the home address is the address from which the child travels to school for the majority of school days per week. If the number of days is exactly equal the home address will be that of the parent who receives the Child Benefit.

In the event of distances being the same for 2 or more applicants where this distance would be the last place/s to be allocated, the place will be allocated to the pupil that is nearer using walking distance as measured using the local authority's school admissions data mapping software.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside their normal age group, for example if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

To do so the parent/carer should include a request with their application, specifying why admission out of normal year group is being requested.

When such a request is made, the trustees on the admission committee will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the views of the headteacher and any supporting evidence provided by the parent.

Guidance for parents wishing to request consideration outside of the chronological age group:

- a) It is advised that all parents/carers who submit a request still make an application for a school place at the normal time.
- b) Requests should be made in writing to the board of trustees' admission committee.
- c) Parents may provide any supplementary documentary evidence to support their request.
- d) Decisions are made by the board of trustees on an individual case basis and the Trust will consider:
 - The views and wishes of the parent
 - The views of the prospective Headteacher/Governing Body
 - Evidence indicating academic, social and emotional development to date
 - Where relevant, the child's medical history
 - Whether the child has previously been educated out of chronological age group
 - If the child would have fallen into another age group if it were not for the child being born prematurely

Decisions will be communicated in writing. Should a request be granted, it does not indicate a formal offer of a school place. Instead it is an agreement to consider the child's application for a school place outside of their normal chronological age group.

Should the request be granted but your child is unsuccessful at obtaining a place at the school, the agreement made by the board of trustees admission committee cannot be extended to other schools. This could result in your child being considered for a school place elsewhere in their normal chronological age group.

Should the request not be granted, your child could still be considered for a place at the school in their normal chronological age group. The school may share details of your request with Tameside Local Authority in order to seek advice. Permission will be obtained prior to the exchange of any information.

Parents (who are not offered their preferred school) will be informed of their statutory right to appeal. However, this right does not apply if they are offered a place in another year group at their preferred school. There is no statutory barrier to children being admitted outside their normal age group, but parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group.

Appealing for a School Place

Parents who are unhappy with their child's school allocation have the right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel.

To appeal for a place at West Hill School you should complete and return an appeal form to Democratic Services, School Appeals, 4th Floor, Tameside One, Market Place, Ashton-under-Lyne, OL6 6BH by March 29th 2024, stating your grounds for appeal. Any appeals received after this date may be heard after others.

All appeals will be heard separately. Every effort will be made to hear appeals before the start of the Autumn Term, but no guarantee can be made that late appeals will be heard by September.

You will be given 10 school days' notice of your appeal hearing date, and you will be sent a copy of the school's case. You can attend the hearing to present the case for your child. You may bring a friend or representative along but they cannot be someone from the school. At the meeting, a representative from the school will present the school's case.

The Clerk to the Panel will inform you in writing of the Panel's decision. The decision is binding and parents have no further right of appeal for the same school in the same school year, unless there has been a significant change in circumstances.

Please note that no places are 'held back' for appeals.

Parents of pupils with an Educational, Health Care Plan have the right to appeal to the SEN Tribunal.

Full details about the appeals process can be found at www.tameside.gov.uk/schools/admissions

TIMETABLE OF CO-ORDINATED SECONDARY ADMISSIONS SCHEME 2024/25

1 September 2023	Letters to be distributed to parents/ online application available
1 September 2023	Online Application system is available
31 October 2023	Closing date for applications to be submitted to the Local Authority and supplementary forms to be submitted to VA schools if required.
10 November 2023	Details of applications and any relevant supplementary forms to be sent to other Local Authorities, if a preference for one of their schools has been expressed.
10 November 2023	This is also the last date by which, exceptionally, changes to preferences or pupil details may be made.
17 November 2023	Details of applications and any relevant supplementary forms to be sent to academies.
8 December 2023	Academies provide the Local Authority with ranked lists of applicants.
Process	The Local Authority will match the ranked lists of all the schools and allocate places.
12 January 2024	Begin exchanging offer status.
26 January 2024	The LA will notify other LAs of its determination with regard to children living in their area.
29 February 2024	The Local Authority will make available for schools to view which pupils have been allocated places at their schools.
1 March 2024	Notification of offers sent to parents.
11 March 2024	Last date for acceptance by parents of offers.
29 March 2024	Closing date for receipt of appeals.
From 1 April 2024	Any places that have become available from this date are allocated and notification sent to parents.
21 June 2024	Last date for hearing of appeals.