

Admissions Policy for Reception (Part A) and Nursery (Part B) at Discovery Academy, Hattersley, Hyde, Tameside (including in year and fair access protocols) 2017 / 2018

Policy Ref:	Gen002
Status	Statutory
Purpose	To ensure that all pupil places in Discovery Academy are allocated in accordance with Carillion Academies Trust policy and offered in an open and fair way.
Committees	Staff and Pupil Well-being
Other linked policies	SEN; Equality
Review Date	Annually in September (next review September 2016)

1

Part A Admissions for Reception

Introduction

1. This policy may be amended in writing at any time by agreement between the Secretary of State and the Academies Trust. Where there is a proposed change in admission arrangements the Trust will consult on these proposals.
2. The Academies Trust will act in accordance with, and will ensure that the Independent Appeal Panel is trained to act in accordance with, all relevant provisions of the School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code published by the Department for Education and Carillion Academies Trust (“the Codes”) as they apply at any given time to maintained schools and with equalities law and the law on admissions as they apply to maintained schools. For this purpose, reference in the Codes or law to “admission authorities” shall be deemed to be references to the Board of the Academies Trust.
3. Notwithstanding paragraph 2 above, the Academies Trust will take part in the Admissions Forum set up by Tameside MBC and have regard to its advice; and will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by Tameside MBC and the local in-year fair access protocol.
4. Notwithstanding any provision in this Agreement, the Secretary of State may:
 - a) direct Carillion Academies Trust to admit a named pupil to Discovery Academy, Ashton under Lyne on application from a local authority. Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult the Academies Trust.
 - b) direct Carillion Academies Trust to admit a named pupil to Discovery Academy, Ashton under Lyne if the Academies Trust has failed to act in accordance with this policy or has otherwise failed to comply with applicable admissions and equalities legislation or the provisions of the Codes.
5. The Academies Trust shall ensure that parents and ‘relevant children’ will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of the Academies Trust. The Independent Appeal Panel will be independent of the Academies Trust. The arrangements for appeals will comply with the School Admission Appeals Code

published by the Department for Education as it applies to Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools. The determination of the appeal panel is binding on all parties.

6. The Academies Trust shall prepare guidance for parents and relevant children about how the appeals process will work and provide them with a named contact who can answer any enquiries they may have about the process. The Academies Trust may, if it chooses, enter into an agreement with a local authority or any other organisation for it to recruit, train and appoint appeal panel members, and to arrange for the process to be independently administered and clerked.
7. In the paragraphs above, 'relevant children' means children who are above compulsory school age, or will be above compulsory school age by the time they start to receive education at the Academy. The Trust therefore will provide places for children in the September following their fourth birthday and if they are refused a place they have the right of appeal to an independent appeals panel.

2

Relevant Area

8. The "relevant area for consultation" means the "Relevant Area" determined by the Tameside MBC for maintained schools in the area (in accordance with the meaning of "Relevant Area" within the School Admissions Code).

Principles

Annual Procedures for determining Admission Arrangements

Consultation

9. The Academies Trust shall consult the following parties on Discovery Academy's proposed admission arrangements for a minimum of eight weeks between 1 November and 1 March in the 'Determination Year':
 - a) Tameside MBC;
 - b) the admission forum for Tameside MBC;
 - c) any other admission authorities for primary and secondary schools located within the relevant area for consultation;
 - d) any other governing body for primary and secondary schools (as far as not falling within paragraph c)) located within the relevant area for consultation;
 - e) affected admission authorities in neighbouring local authority areas; and
 - f) parents living in the relevant area for consultation whose children have attained the age of two but are not above compulsory school age and who are or will be eligible to apply to be admitted to the Academy.

Such consultation shall be in line with the requirements of the Codes and relevant admissions legislation, which at the date of this Agreement is section 89 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended, and Regulations under that section. Tameside MBC will carry out the consultation on behalf of the Carillion Academies Trust.

10. Consultation in line with paragraph 9 is not required in any year where the following conditions are met.
 - a) the admission arrangements were consulted upon in one or both of the previous two years; and
 - b) there have been no changes, or proposed changes, since the last consultation.

As soon as any changes are made to arrangements, or proposed, the consultation cycle in paragraph 9 must be followed for the next determination year.

Academy Trust Determination of Admission Arrangements

11. The Academies Trust will consider comments made by those consulted in accordance with paragraph 9, including any requests to amend the proposed admission number, before determining the admission arrangements for Discovery Academy.
12. The Academies Trust will determine Discovery Academy's admission arrangements annually by 15 April of the Determination Year and notify consultees listed in paragraph 9 what has been determined within 14 days of that decision being made. The Trust will determine admission arrangements for entry in September by 28 February in the determination year.

3

Representations about admission arrangements

13. Where the Academies Trust has determined the Academy's admission arrangements and notified all consultees listed in paragraph 9, if any of those persons or bodies objects to the Academy's admission arrangements, including the proposed admission number, they can make representations to the Secretary of State. Any representations must be made by 30 June in the Determination Year. Once the admission arrangements have been determined, anyone who believes these are unfair or unlawful may make an objection the Schools Adjudicator. Objections to admission arrangements for entry in September 2018 must be referred to the Adjudicator by 30th June 2017. For all subsequent years, objections must be referred to the Adjudicator by 15th May.

Secretary of State's Consent for Changes to Admission Arrangements

14. Where the admission arrangements determined in a Determination Year in accordance with paragraph 12 are different from the admission arrangements currently in existence for Discovery Academy, the Trust shall by 30 June in the Determination Year apply to the Secretary of State for him to consent to such amended admission arrangements.

Secretary of State's Power to Accept, Modify or Reject Admission Arrangements

15. Where the Secretary of State has received any representations made in accordance with paragraph 14, the Secretary of State must consult the Academies Trust on such representations. Following such consultation, by 31 July in the Determination Year the Secretary of State may direct that the Academies Trust amends the proposed admission arrangements for the Academy. The Academies Trust shall comply with any such direction.
16. Where the Secretary of State has received an application made in accordance with paragraph 14 seeking his consent to any amended admission arrangements, the Secretary of State must by 31 July in the Determination Year either approve the amended admission arrangements or direct that the amended admission arrangements are not implemented or must be modified. The Academies Trust must comply with any such direction.

Publication of Admission Arrangements

17. The Academies Trust shall, each Determination Year publish Discovery Academy agreed admission arrangements by:
 - a) copies being sent to Tameside MBC;
 - b) copies being made available without charge on request from the Academy;
 - c) a copy being uploaded to the Academy website.
18. The published admission arrangements will set out:

- a) the name and address of Discovery Academy and contact details;
- b) a summary of the admission policy, including full oversubscription criteria;
- c) numbers of places and applications for those places in the previous year; and
- d) arrangements for hearing appeals.

Proposed changes to Admission Arrangements by Discovery Academy after arrangements have been published

4

19. Subject to paragraph 20, once the Academy's admission arrangements have been determined for a particular year and published, the Academies Trust will not make any change to such arrangements unless there is a major change of circumstances and the following procedures have been followed:
 - a) the Academies Trust has consulted those who are required to be consulted under paragraph 9 above on the proposed variation;
 - b) following such consultation, the Academies Trust has applied to the Secretary of State to approve the change setting out:
 - i) the proposed change;
 - ii) reasons for wishing to make such a change;
 - iii) any comments or objections to the proposal from those consulted; and
 - c) following such application, the Secretary of State has provided his consent to the proposed variation.
20. The Academies Trust shall following the prior written agreement or direction of the Secretary of State vary the Academy's admission arrangements where such changes are necessary to ensure compliance with the relevant provisions of admissions law or the Codes as they apply to maintained schools. Such changes may be made at any time.
21. Any changes to the Academy's admission arrangements brought about through the variation processes in paragraphs 19 or 20 above will be published within the Academy's prospectus and on its website and be communicated within 7 days to those persons who must be consulted under paragraph 9.
22. The Academies Trust must make arrangements for a parent of a child who has attained the age of two but is not above compulsory school age and who has been, is or will be eligible to apply to be admitted to the Academy to make representations to the Secretary of State that any aspect of the Academy's admission arrangements does not comply with the relevant provisions of admissions law or the Codes as they apply to maintained schools.
23. Where a representation is made in accordance with paragraph 22, the Secretary of State may, after consulting the Academies Trust, direct that the Academies Trust modify its arrangements for the admission of students to the Academy so that they comply with the relevant provisions of admissions law and the Codes as they apply to maintained schools. The Academies Trust must comply with any such direction.
24. Records of applications and admissions to Discovery Academy shall be kept by the Academies Trust for a minimum period of ten years and shall be open for inspection by the Secretary of State.

Procedure for admitting pupils to Discovery Academy

Admission Number

25. The Academies Trust has an agreed admissions numbers for Discovery Academy for the year **2017 / 2018** of 30 pupils in Reception, and, subject to any changes approved or required by the Secretary of State, for subsequent years. The Academy has an agreed admissions number of 30 pupils per year up to Year 6 and the Academy will therefore admit 30 pupils in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received.
26. In any specific year, the Trust may set a higher admission number than 30 the agreed admission number for an applicable year group at Discovery Academy. Before setting an admission number higher than its agreed admission number, the Academies Trust will consult those listed at paragraph 9. Pupils will not be admitted in any year group above the published admission number for that year group unless exceptional circumstances apply and such circumstances shall be reported to the Secretary of State.

5

Process of Application for Reception

27. Arrangements for applications for places at Discovery Academy will be made in accordance with the Tameside MBC's co-ordinated admission arrangements and will be made on the through the on-line Common Application process provided and administered by Tameside MBC. The process can be accessed here <http://tameside.gov.uk/admissions>
28. The Trust will use Tameside MBC's timetable for applications to Discovery Academy, each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year). This will fit in with the indicative timetable below for the co-ordination of admission arrangements within Tameside MBC, to be agreed by the Admission Forum:
- By **September** - The Academies Trust will publish in the Academy prospectus information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for the following September (e.g. in September 2017 for admission in September 2018). This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective pupils and their parents to visit the school. The Academies Trust will also provide information in relation to Discovery Academy to Tameside MBC and other relevant local authorities' for inclusion in the composite prospectus, as required;
 - September/October** - The Academies Trust will provide opportunities for parents to visit the Academy;
 - October** – the on-line Common Application process to be followed. The process can be accessed here <http://tameside.gov.uk/admissions>.

The national closing date for applications are as follows:

- 31 October for secondary applications; and
- 15 January for Primary applications.

The Carillion Academies Trust and Discovery Academy will ensure its application processes enable parents to apply before these deadlines.

29. Where fewer applicants than the published admission number for the relevant year groups are received, the Academy Trust will offer places at the Academy to all those who have applied.

Procedures for admission where Discovery Academy is oversubscribed

30. Where in any year the Academy receives more successful applications for places than there are places available the following criteria will apply:

(i) Looked after Children or children who have previously been looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an 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).

6

(ii) Children and families with exceptional medical or social needs.

Written evidence must be provided by a suitably qualified professional – e.g. a GP or consultant for medical needs, or a social worker for social needs – the information must confirm the exceptional medical or social need and demonstrate how the specified school is the only school that can meet the defined needs of the child. A panel of Governors made up from the Academy's Local Governing Body will make a decision as to whether to admit a child under this criterion, using the evidence provided. Parents and carers are responsible for providing all information in support of an application by the closing date, the Academy will not ask for additional information. All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence.

(iii) Siblings

This will apply where there are brothers or sisters attending the Academy at the time of application, and who will be still be attending at the time of admission – the September when a pupil goes into Reception. Preference will be given to children living nearest to the Academy.

The sibling criterion includes natural brothers/sisters, half-brothers/sisters, step-brothers/sisters, adopted brothers/sisters, brothers/sisters of fostered children, children of the parent/carer's partner. In each case they must be living at the same address. This allows for the admittance of children whose siblings will still be attending the preferred school.

(iv) All other applications on distance

Preference will be given to pupils living nearest to the Academy, taking into account ease of access to, and distance from, alternative schools.

Ease of access will be considered when parents provide details of particular reasons which mean their child could reach the nearest school but would face a disproportionately long journey to another school if denied admission to their nearest school. Details must be provided on the on-line form.

Definitions for admissions arrangements

Unless stated otherwise in the admissions arrangements, which can be obtained in full from the school or the Tameside Council website here <http://tameside.gov.uk/admissions> - the following definitions will apply:

Definition of distance

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 school's main gate. Measurements will be made using the local authority's school admissions data mapping software, which uses a geographical information system based on the Ordnance Survey.

Home address

The address from which distance will be measured is the permanent residential address (at the time of application) of the parent with whom the child normally lives. Where parents have shared responsibility – the child lives with each for part of the week – the home address is the one from which the child travels to the Academy the most during a week. If the number of days is equal, the home address will be that of the parent who receives the child benefit.

Tie-breaker

If the Academy is over-subscribed within any of the criteria, priority will be given to those children living nearest to the Academy. In the event of distances being the same for two or more applicants, where the 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.

In cases where twins, triplets, or other multiple birth siblings are split when allocations take place, they will be allocated a place over the published admission number and will remain excepted pupils for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The Council's policy is to admit children into the reception year in the September following their fourth birthday.

31. In the first instance admissions and appeals for Discovery Academy will be managed by Tameside MBC on the Trust's behalf.

Operation of waiting lists

32. Discovery Academy will operate a waiting list until the end of the first term after the start of the school year. This will be maintained by Discovery Academy and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list. Any child that is unsuccessful at their first assessment can request a second chance in the assessment process, within an agreed time limit.
33. Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out above. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Arrangements for admitting pupils to other year groups, including to replace any pupils who have left Discovery Academy

34. Local authorities will co-ordinate admissions for in-year applications and for applications for year groups other than the normal point(s) of entry. This will not affect the Academies' right to determine which applicants have priority for admission.
35. Subject to any provisions in the LA's co-ordinated admission arrangements relating to applications submitted for years other than the normal year of entry, Discovery Academy will consider all such applications and if the year group applied for has a place available, admit the child unless one of the permitted reliefs applies. If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria shall apply. Parents whose application is turned down shall be entitled to appeal. Parents shall only be entitled to appeal once in any academic year.

Arrangements for Admission of students as Discovery Academy builds to its full capacity

36. Discovery Academy will open in September 2016 with a Published Admission Number of 30 relating solely to pupils in Reception.

37. Information about the Trust can be found on the website at www.carillionacademiestrust.org or about Discovery Academy at www.Discoveryacademyashton.org or telephone 07753 797 814.

Part B Admissions to Nursery

1. Definition

This policy was written with reference to Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on the Delivery of Free Early Education for Three and Four Year Olds and Securing Sufficient Childcare. (September 2014). The Local Governing Body will follow this policy so as to ensure consistency for parents in applying for nursery places.

9

2. Purpose

The policy follows Tameside MBC's Nursery Education Policy, the purpose of which is:

- To provide clear guidance for the Local Governing Body at Discovery Academy on Nursery Admissions; and
- To ensure a consistent approach to Nursery Admissions.

3. Entitlement to Nursery Education Places

All children are entitled to a free part-time nursery education place. That entitlement is from the term **after** their third birthday. However, provision is made by a range of providers and the local authority aims to provide places in the year before they enter Reception. Some places may be available for three year olds in the term after their 3rd birthday if there are places available.

From September 2013 each child is entitled to a maximum of 15 hours free early years education per week from the term following their third birthday. This entitlement can be delivered flexibly by a school (where it is able to do so and in response to parental demand). If the free entitlement is taken flexibly, it must be no less than two and a half hours per session and no more than 10 hours per day. The full 15 hours entitlement should be over no fewer than 2 days.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Local Authority will:

- distribute Tameside's policy for nursery admissions to all appropriate Governing Bodies;
- provide schools with a standard nursery admissions application form;
- disseminate information about nursery education providers via the Family Information Service;
- provide guidance and support for Governing Bodies offering Nursery provision;
- publish timescales for Nursery Admissions annually; and
- measure distances by request.

The Local Governing Body will:

- keep a record of all parents expressing an interest in a nursery place for their child;
- send out application forms to parents of children, who have expressed an interest according to Tameside MBC's timescales;
- make it clear on all correspondence to parents that a place in nursery does not guarantee a place in Reception at Discovery Academy;
- inform parents in writing of an offer or a refusal according to Tameside MBC's timescales; and
- provide copies of the following leaflets/factsheets to parents who have been refused a place:
 - Free entitlement funding – Directory;
 - Admissions to Nursery Classes; and
 - How to claim your free early education place.

Parents / carers are expected to:

- register their interest in a particular school Nursery by contacting that school;
- complete and return an application form according to given timescales; and
- confirm acceptance of a place.

5. Allocation of nursery places

Places will be allocated to Tameside MBC residents who will be 4 years old between 1 September 2017 and 31 August 2018 in the first instance. Places will be allocated by a panel from the Local Governing Body.

10

Places would be offered to children who will become 4 years old between 1st September 2017 and 31st August 2018 (and therefore born between 1st September 2013 and 31st August 2014).

Where Discovery Academy receives less applications from Tameside MBC residents who will be 4 years old between 1 September 2017 and 31 August 2018 than there are places available, all must be offered places. When Discovery Academy receives more applications from Tameside MBC residents who will be 4 years old between 1 September 2017 and 31st August 2018 than there are places available, the following over subscription criteria will be applied in order:

- 1 Looked after Children or children who have previously been looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order.
- 2 Children with Exceptional Medical Needs or Home Circumstances and / or Special Educational Needs - Written evidence must be provided from a doctor or other agency that he/she has exceptional needs which means that admission to a particular school nursery is essential. A panel from the Local Governing Body will make a decision as to whether to admit a child under this criteria using the evidence provided. All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence.

It is anticipated that the total number of children allocated places according to these criteria would form only a small proportion of the total number of children attending the Nursery.

- 3 Siblings - This will apply where the applicant is 4 years old by 31st August 2018 and has brothers or sisters attending Discovery Academy at the time of application, who will still be attending at the time of admission. Within the sibling tiebreaker, preference will be given to pupils living nearest to Discovery Academy.

The sibling criterion includes; natural sisters/brothers; half-sisters/brothers; step sisters/brothers; adopted sisters/brothers; sisters/brothers of fostered children, and in each case living at the same address. This allows for the admittance of children whose siblings will still be attending Discovery Academy.

- 4 Age - Priority will be given to children in the following order:

1. Children who will be 4 years old by 31st December 2017;
2. Children who will be 4 years old by 31st March 2018;
3. Children who will be 4 years old by 31st August 2018.

Where over subscription occurs in applying the above criteria, a tiebreaker will be applied to all applications remaining within the criteria. Priority will be given to applicants who live closest to Discovery Academy.

Distance will be measured as a straight line from the child's home address to the main gate to the Academy property using the Tameside MBC's school admissions data mapping software, which uses 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 lives. 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 will travel to nursery for the majority of nursery 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.

11

In the event of distances being the same for 2 or more applications 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 TMBC's school admissions data mapping software.

6. Allocating places to Tameside resident children applying after the main allocation procedure has been completed

When Discovery Academy still has nursery places available after the main allocation process has been completed, the Local Governing Body may offer places to subsequent applicants on a 'first come first served basis', as long as that child is of the correct age i.e. will become 4 years old between 1st September 2017 and 31st August 2018 (and therefore born between 1st September 2013 and 31st August 2014) and lives in Tameside MBC. Should a Tameside MBC resident parent request a place after the allocation process and the Academy has places available, a place would normally be offered.

7. Waiting Lists

When Discovery Academy has allocated all its nursery places, it may operate a waiting list. If a place becomes available, it may be allocated to a child on the waiting list according to the over subscription criteria.

8. If Discovery Academy still has nursery places available after the summer half term 2016, the following will apply

Offering places to children who do not live in Tameside MBC. Where Discovery Academy still has nursery places available after the summer half term preceding the September that applicants wish to be admitted, these may be allocated to children who do not live in Tameside MBC and who will become 4 years old between 1st September 2017 and 31st August 2018 (and therefore born between 1st September 2013 and 31st August 2014), according to the over subscription criteria.

9. If Discovery Academy still has nursery places available after the start of term in September 2016, the following may apply

Offering places to children who will become 3 years old between 1st September 2017 and 31st December 2017 who live in Tameside. The Local Governing Body may decide that it will offer empty places to Tameside MBC resident pupils who will become 3 years old between 1st September 2017 and 31st December 2017 if there are still places available after the start of term in September 2017. Pupils will not be able to start in the nursery until the beginning of the term **after** they become 3 i.e. January 2018 at the earliest. Pupils accepted into the Nursery in this category will not be required to apply for a place in September 2018 as they will automatically continue in the Nursery. Places will be offered using similar criteria as for the main allocation:

- 1 Looked after Children or children who have previously been looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order.
- 2 Children with Exceptional Medical Needs or Home Circumstances and / or Special Educational Needs.
- 3 Age - Children who will be 3 years old by 31st December 2017 to start in January 2018.

Tiebreaker - Siblings and Distance - Where over subscription occurs in applying criteria 1, 2 or 3; a tiebreaker will be applied to all applications remaining within the criteria. Priority will be given to applicants who have a sibling in the Academy at the time of admission followed by applicants who live closest to the Academy.

10. If Discovery Academy still has nursery places available after the start of term in January 2016, the following may apply:

Offering places to children who will become 3 years old between 1st January 2018 and 31st March 2018 who live in Tameside. The Local Governing Body may decide that it will offer empty places to Tameside resident pupils who will become 3 years old between 1st January 2018 and 31st March 2018 if there are still places available after the start of term in January 2018. Pupils will not be able to start in the nursery until the beginning of the term **after** they become 3 i.e. after Easter 2018 at the earliest. Pupils accepted into the nursery in this category will not be required to apply for a place in September 2018 as they will automatically continue in the nursery. Places must be offered using similar criteria as for the main allocation:

- 1 Looked after Children or children who have previously been looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order.
- 2 Children with Exceptional Medical Needs or Home Circumstances and / or Special Educational Needs.
- 3 Age - Children who will be 3 years old by 31st March 2018 to start after Easter 2018.

Tiebreaker - Siblings and Distance

Where over subscription occurs in applying criteria 1, 2 or 3, a tiebreaker will be applied to all applications remaining within the criteria. Priority will be given to applicants who have a sibling in the Discovery Academy at the time of admission followed by applicants who live closest to the Academy.

Parents do not have the right of appeal against the decision of the Local Governing Body to refuse admission to the Nursery.

Attendance at the nursery does not guarantee a place in Reception at Discovery Academy.