Admissions Policy 2020/2021

The Governing Body is the Admissions Authority for St Margaret's Academy.

This policy details the admission arrangements for the Academy and should be read in conjunction with the primary and in year co-ordinated schemes and other agreed policies of Torbay Local Authority (LA). All policies and procedures seek to comply with the requirements of the School Admissions Code.

There will be 60 reception places available in September 2020.

The need to apply

All parents must make an application for their child to be admitted to a maintained primary school, using a common application form. Places are not allocated to a child automatically, even where:

- there is an older sibling attending here;
- a child attends a particular pre-school or nursery;
- a parent has expressed an interest at any time in the school;
- the child has always lived close to the school.

No places will be held in reserve for a child who applies late; the governing body cannot hold empty places if another child applies for admission. We will share information with the LA and will publicise the need to apply but the responsibility for making an application will be with the parent.

How to apply for a place at the normal admission round-Reception

The normal round of admissions is when children can join our school in their Reception Year, the September after the child's 4th birthday. So that all parents who wish to apply for a place in the Reception class of a school can do so each LA co-ordinates applications for the schools in its area. This means parents will receive one offer of a school place at the same time as other parents. For our school, Torbay is the LA which co-ordinates applications which have been made either direct to Torbay or passed on by other LAs.

Parents who wish to apply or "express a preference" for a Reception place must use a Common Application Form provided by the LA where the child lives. For Torbay residents, this form can be found at www.torbay.gov.uk/schooladmissions. Guidance on how to complete the form is available in the TIPS8 booklet which can be found on the same web page.

If your child lives in another LA you must apply by contacting that LA even though you are requesting a place here.

Allocation of Places

Children whose Education, Health and Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs names the school will be admitted to the Academy (See Note 1). If there are enough places for everyone who has applied, we will offer every child a place.

If there are fewer applications than places then no application will be refused.

If we have more applications than there are places, we will offer places according to the following criteria:-

- Children Looked After or children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order (See Note 2).
- Children without an Education, Healthy & Care Plan (EHCP) or a Statement of Special Educational Needs who the Local Authority have identified as needing access to the Enhanced Resource.
- Children who will have a sibling attending the school at the time of application (See Note 3).
- Children of staff who have been employed at St Margaret's Academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to St Margaret's Academy School is made and/or

  the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.(see Note 4)

- Other children (prioritised by distance from home to school)

Tie Break

Where there are more applications than places available in a particular category, those living closest to the school will have priority for any places available, (i.e. the shorter the distance the higher the priority). Measurements are taken by a straightline distance using the Council's electronic mapping system (GIS). Measurements will be made from the co-ordinates of the home address (see Note 5) as pinpointed on the Council's system, to the co-ordinates of the school as pinpointed on the Council's system.

The pinpoint will be within the boundary of the property and its precise location will be determined by Torbay Council. This is for admissions purposes only and is not used to determine eligibility for school transport. In the event that applicants cannot be separated using the distance tie-breaker (i.e. they live identical distances from the school), the allocation of a place will be by random selection using a random number generator and in the presence of a senior manager.

Notification of Places

In accordance with the co-ordinated admissions policy the local authority will make the formal offer of a place to parents or guardians on behalf of the Governing Body of the Academy. Parents should let the Academy know within 10 days if they wish to either accept or reject the offer of a place. This will in no way affect parents' right of appeal for a place at another school.

Appeals Procedure

Parents who wish to appeal against the decision not to offer their child a place at the school must appeal to Governance Support at Torbay Council.

The appeal will be heard by an independent appeals panel. Parents will receive advanced notification of the date and time of their appeal hearing, to which they can go and make their case. If they wish, parents may be accompanied by an advisor or friend. Following the appeal, the Clerk to the appeals panel will write to parents with the decision.

Waiting List

A waiting list will be drawn up from unsuccessful applicants, giving priority in accordance with the tie break arrangements. Any places which become available will be filled from the waiting list. If a child has been placed on the waiting list, parents will be informed and asked to confirm that they wish to leave their child's name on the list, which will be retained until the end of the autumn term.

Points of Admission

There is a legal requirement that all children begin full time education by the beginning of the term following their **fifth** birthday. All places offered in Reception at the normal round are for full-time admission in the September following their **fourth** birthday. This is a legal requirement on schools but not on parents who retain a right to defer admission.

Deferred Admission

A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August. The term 'summer born' is used to refer to children born from 1 April to 31 August.

All parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age. This allows parents to apply for a school place and to take up that place during the Reception year without jeopardising the offer of a place. This is a decision for the parent to make, taking all factors into account, including the advice of educational professionals.

Those parents who decide that their child should defer must inform the Headteacher. Where a parent does not inform the Headteacher that admission is to be deferred and does not admit the child in September, the place will be withdrawn and may be offered to another child.

Where a child is not of statutory school age, the academy, in consultation with the parents, may defer entrance or have a "staged" induction if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the child. All children will have a period of half day attendance as part of their induction process.

Children born in the summer term, however, are not required to start school until a full year after the point at which they could first have been admitted – the point at which other children in their age range are beginning Year 1.

Should the parent wish their child to be admitted to Reception the following September, rather than Year 1, they may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group as a Delayed Admission.

Delayed Admission

Where a request is made for a child to start an academic year later than normal, but still enter at the Reception stage, it is expected that such an arrangement will be supported with any combination of medical, social or educational evidence from independent professionals. It is advisable to submit an application on time in any event whilst a request for delayed admission is considered by all parties including the school. You should be aware that it is a school decision where a child will be educated within the establishment. Another school might not agree with our decision whether it is appropriate to educate your child out of his or her chronological Year Group. This includes the secondary school your child moves on to. If you request delayed admission into Reception, we will consider your reasons and either agree or inform you in writing why we do not agree.

Admissions at other times – In Year Admissions

You can make a request for admission after the normal round of admissions – after 31st August 2020 – using the Torbay In Year Application Form, form TIPS4/B. If you are seeking an in-year place because your child has just moved to the area and does not already have a school place, admission would be as soon as possible. If your child already has a school place locally, admission would normally be at the beginning of a term or half-term.

Admissions outside a child's normal age group

Just as a parent can request delayed admission to Reception, you can request a place in a different Year Group if, for example, a child is particularly gifted or talented or has missed a significant period of education through ill health. We will consider each request on its own merits. There is a statutory right of appeal if this is refused unless we offer a place in the child's normal or chronological age group.

Note 1

An Education, Health and Care plan is a plan made by the local authority under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education provision required for that child.

A Statement of Special Educational Need is a statement made by the local authority under Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 specifying the special educational provision required for that child.

Note 2

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) at the time of making an application to a school.

This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).

Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

See Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

Note 3

For these purposes, brothers and sisters must be living at the same address as your child. This also includes children living with the family, for example, foster children and stepchildren. The definition does not include cousins or families sharing a house. (See admissions code definition)

Note 4

'Staff' includes all those on the payroll of the school. 'Children of staff' refers to situations where the staff member is the natural parent, the legal guardian or a resident step parent.

Note 5

For admission purposes, the home address is defined as:

the address of the person with parental responsibility for the child and with whom the child lives for 80% of the school week (Sunday night to Thursday night), at the time of application, supported through a court order. Where a child resides through shared custody, or where there is no legal evidence of an alternative arrangement, the address will be with the parent who receives or would be eligible for child benefit, or the address where the child is registered with a GP. The final decision on residence rests with the admission authority. For children in public care the address will be the carer's address. Parents of oversubscribed schools will be asked to provide evidence of address if this cannot be verified through council tax records. This may include correspondence received from HM Revenue and Customs, Child Benefit Division or Tax Credits Division. A utility bill may be accepted but NOT a bank statement or mobile phone statement.