

Ormiston Academies Trust

## Ormiston Rivers Academy Admissions policy

### Policy version control

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# 1. Policy statement and principles

## 1.1. Policy aims and principles

- 1.1.1. This policy is designed to ensure there is an open and fair admissions procedure for all applicants and to help guide parents and their children through the application process. The academy's admissions arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social or racial group, or a child with a disability or special educational needs, and that other academy policies do not discourage parents from applying for a place for their child.
- 1.1.2. This policy details the academies arrangements for admissions and will apply to all admissions from 01/09/2024 to 31/08/2025. This includes in-year admissions within this period.
- 1.1.3. Parents are encouraged to visit the academy with their child if they are planning to apply for a place. We have a number of open days during the year, these will be publicised on our website and via local primary schools. Arrangements for visits outside these dates can be made through the academy office on 01621 782377.
- 1.1.4. The Academy Trust will consult on the admissions arrangements at least once every seven years or if there are proposed changes to the admission arrangements which require consultation.
- 1.1.5. This policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by OAT / the academy and is written in line with current legislation and guidance.

## 1.2. Monitoring and review

- 1.2.1. This policy will be reviewed annually or in the following circumstances:
- Changes in legislation and / or government guidance
  - As a result of any other significant change or event
  - As the result of a decision of an Adjudicator
  - In the event that the policy is determined not to be effective
- 1.2.2. If there are urgent concerns these should be raised to the Principal in the first instance for them to determine whether a review of the policy is required in advance of the review date.

# 2. Academy admissions

- 2.1.1. The academy admits students between the ages of 11-18. The main intakes are:
- Secondary
  - Sixth form

2.2. We encourage entry at the academy's main intake time so as to aid academic progression without interruption, however, applications are welcome for entry in any year.

## 2.3. Definitions

2.3.1. The academy uses the following definitions when applying this policy:

## 2.4. Distance

2.4.1. This is the straight line distance between the academy main gate and the child's home address (front door).

2.4.2. The LA computerised system is used to measure this distance. Where two dwellings with the same front entrance the closest dwelling to the front door (lower floor and counting clockwise) will be regarded as being closer to the academy.

## 2.5. Dual address

2.5.1. Where a child lives at two different addresses, the 'home' address will be determined as the address at which the child resides for the majority of school nights. School nights are Sunday night to Thursday night inclusive. In a case where the child spends an equal number of school nights at each address, then the address where the child benefit is paid will be used. Where no child benefit is claimed the address used to register the child with a doctor will be used.

## 2.6. Catchment area

2.6.1. Please see Appendix 3

## 2.7. Siblings

2.7.1. A sibling is defined as:

- A brother or sister (including half brothers or sisters) who shares one or both parents, whether or not resident in the same household
- A step-brother or sister where the two children are related by a parent's marriage
- An adopted or foster child living in the same household under the terms of the resident's order
- Another child living in the same household where the adult has parental responsibility

2.7.2. In the case of twins or other children from multiple births (two or more siblings in one year group) and where only one place is available, the application will be considered together as one application.

## 2.8. Eligibility criteria

2.8.1. Entry to the academy is subject to the regulations regarding nationality, residency status and eligibility to study in the United Kingdom. Students / pupils are eligible to be admitted to the academy if:

- They are British citizens and / or EU nationals
- They are a non-EU national that has –

- 'Exceptional' or 'Indefinite Leave to Remain' in this country
- Refugee status

## 2.9. Waiting list

- 2.9.1. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, children who have been refused a place will be automatically placed on a waiting list unless there is a specific request that this should not happen. The child may gain entry to the academy if a place becomes available.
- 2.9.2. The academy will maintain a waiting list until 31 December following the main academy intake in September. Each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the academy's oversubscription criteria in which the application was originally considered. Priority will not be given to children based on the date their application was received or the date when they were added to the list.

## 2.10. Withdrawal of a place

2.10.1. The academy will only withdraw an offer of a place if:

- The place was offered in error
- Acceptance of the place was not received in a reasonable period of time
- The offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application (the academy may request evidence to ensure the child meets the admissions criteria) – if this occurs the application will be considered afresh

2.10.2. The academy will not withdraw the place if the student has started at the academy unless the place was obtained fraudulently. If this is the case then the academy will decide whether to withdraw the place based on the circumstances including the length of time the child has been at the academy.

## 2.11. Determining arrangements and consultation

- 2.11.1. Admissions arrangements will be set annually, this will happen even if there are no changes from previous years and a consultation is not required.
- 2.11.2. If the academy changes any significant aspect of the admissions procedure then OAT will be informed prior to making changes and beginning the consultation process. Any significant changes proposed by the academy must be approved by OAT.
- 2.11.3. The academy will consult on admissions arrangements when changes to the academies' arrangements are proposed (no consultation is required for an increase in PAN or changes to ensure compliance with the admissions regulations). Where the admission arrangements have not changed from the previous year there is no requirement to consult, subject to the requirement that we must consult on our admission arrangements at least once every seven years, even if there have been no changes during that period.

2.11.4. We will publish any consultation for admissions on our website and notify appropriate stakeholders. If there are any substantive responses to the academy's consultation then these will be sent to OAT. Any subsequent changes will be made in consultation with OAT.

2.11.5. Once our admissions arrangements have been determined we will notify the appropriate bodies and publish a copy of the determined arrangements on our website.

## 2.12. Admission of children outside their normal age group

2.12.1. Parents may seek a place for their child outside their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. If parents wish to do this they must contact, in the first instance, The Academy Admissions Officer via the front office (01621 782377). Contact with the academy must be made at the earliest opportunity to avoid any delays in the application process.

2.12.2. The decision whether a child is admitted outside of their normal age group will be made on a case by case basis by the academy's governing body. A panel of at least three governors will consider the admission request based on the student's:

- Academic ability
- Social and emotional development
- Views of the parents and principal; and
- Any additional relevant information available

2.12.3. The panel will have to be satisfied that the child would be able to cope with the work of the year applied for **and** that the student would be able to cope with the personal development whilst being with a year group who are of a different age. In order to support any application parents will need to submit evidence to demonstrate that the admission into a different year group is in the best interests of the child.

2.12.4. Once the governing body has made a decision the child can then apply to the academy using the process detailed in this policy. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place however this right does not apply if the child is offered a place at the academy but it is not in their preferred age group.

## 2.13. Complaints about admissions arrangements

2.13.1. Any person, or body, can make an objection to the Schools Adjudicator when they consider the academy's arrangements are unlawful, or not in compliance with the School Admissions Code / relevant legislation relating to admissions.

2.13.2. Complaints about the appeals panel can be made to the Secretary of State.

## 3. Secondary admissions

The process detailed in this section is for admissions for secondary admissions. For further information on this process please contact The Academy Admissions Officer, via the front office on 01621 782377.

### 3.1. Number of spaces (PAN)

3.1.1. The academy has an agreed admission number of 210 per year.

### 3.2. Application process

3.2.1. Applications for the 2024/25 academic year begins 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023.

3.2.2. To apply you need to complete the local authority's (LA) common application form (CAF) / academy's form and submit this directly to the LA / academy by the deadline, 31 October 2023. The CAF is available via the Essex County Council website:

[Secondary school places - Essex County Council](#)  
[Secondary school places - Essex County Council](#)

Late applications will not be considered until all other applications have been reviewed.

3.2.3. All offers of secondary places will be made through the LA. The academy will not contact parents about the outcome of their application until the offer from the local authority has been received. All offers will be made on the secondary national offer day (1 March or the next working day).

### 3.3. Selection criteria

3.3.1. If the number of applications is less than the number of spaces then all children will be offered places. There is no guarantee of a place for children living in the priority admission area.

### 3.4. Oversubscription criteria

3.4.1. If the academy receives more applications than there are available places then children with the academy named on an education, health care plan (EHC) or equivalent will be automatically admitted to the academy. If there are still places available, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the oversubscription criteria set out below:

- (1) Looked after children and those who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after was adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. A Looked After Child is either a child who is in the care of a local authority, or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (definition used is in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989); or, those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. Previously Looked After Children are those who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

- (2) Children living in the priority admission area <sup>(1)</sup> with a sibling attending the school. Sibling is defined in these arrangements as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters.
- (3) Other children living in the priority admission area;
- (4) Children of staff 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; and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
- (5) Children living outside the priority admission area with a sibling attending the school;
- (6) Remaining applicants.

**3.4.2** Random allocation will be used as a tie-break in category '3' above to decide who has highest priority for admission if the distance between two children's homes and the school is the same. This process will be independently verified. In the event of oversubscription within any of the above criteria, priority will be determined by straight line distance from home to school, those living closest being given highest priority. Exceptional medical circumstances (supported by medical evidence) may override the above criteria (other than Looked After Children and previously looked after children).

### 3.5. In-year admissions

3.5.1. Applications for in-year admissions are considered in the same way as those made at the beginning of the academic year and are dealt with in accordance the local authorities Fair Access Protocol. In-year admissions forms can be obtained from the Essex County Council website at:

[Secondary school places - Essex County Council](#)

3.5.2. Students included in the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those held on the waiting list. Once a student has been identified for admission to the academy under the Fair Access Protocol the academy will notify the local authority within seven calendar days of the decision to accept or refuse the student's admission.

3.5.3. If the academy refuses entry, the local authority may request a direction from the Education Funding Agency (on behalf of the Secretary of State). The academy will set out its reasons for refusal in writing to the local authority within 15 calendar days (for CLA this is reduced to seven calendar days) and may make further representations directly to the EFA (these will be made within seven calendar days). The decision of the Secretary of State will be binding upon the academy.

### 3.6. Unsuccessful applications

- 3.6.1. The academy will inform the child's parent if a decision has been made to refuse their child a place at the academy for which they have applied, this will include the reason why admission was refused, information about the right to appeal, deadlines and contact details.
- 3.6.2. A child is allowed to be on the academy waiting list while lodging an appeal and the appeal will not affect their position on the list. The decision of the appeals panel is binding on the academy.

## 4. Sixth form admissions

The process detailed in this section is for admissions for sixth form admissions. For further information on this process please contact the Sixth Form Team on 01621 787882.

### 4.1. Application process

- 4.1.1. Applications for the 2024/25 academic year begins 1st October 2023. The closing date for applications for this year is 16th December 2023.
- 4.1.2. To apply you need to complete the academy's form and submit this directly to the academy by the deadline. The academy will contact the student applying directly about the outcome of their application.
- 4.1.3. Late applications will only be considered where there is a surplus of places in the academy / course(s) applied for once the oversubscription criteria has been applied.

### 4.2. Selection criteria

- 4.2.1. Priority will be given to existing Ormiston Rivers' Year 11 students. External applications will also be considered, and all admissions to the sixth form will be determined in accordance with the following criteria, in the order set out below:
  - (i) That the student has attained the specific academic requirements for entry to sixth form, which are published on the sixth form application form and in the sixth form prospectus.
  - (ii) That there is a suitable course available with a vacancy. Group sizes may vary depending on the nature of the subject and availability of resources.
  - (iii) That the student has demonstrated a commitment to their studies pre-16, evidenced by their school and/or progress report and attendance record.

### 4.3. Oversubscription criteria

- 4.3.1. If the academy receives more applications that meet the selection criteria above than there are available places, priority for admission will be in line with the oversubscription criteria set out below:
  - (i) That criteria (i) to (iii) above have been met;
  - (ii) then, Looked After Children are first to be admitted (see 3.4.1 above for clarification);
  - (iii) then, students living in the priority admissions area, with a sibling attending the school;
  - (iv) then, other students living in the priority admissions area;

- (v) then, children of staff, where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post at the school for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage;
- (vi) then, remaining applications.

4.3.2. In the event of oversubscription within any of the above criteria, priority will be determined by straight line distance from home to school; those living closest being given highest priority. Exceptional medical circumstances (supported by medical evidence) may override the above criteria (other than Looked After Children and previously looked after children). In the event of a tie-breaker being required, this will be via random allocation supervised by an independent person or panel.

#### 4.4. In-year admissions

- 4.4.1. Applications for in-year admissions are considered in the same way as those made at the beginning of the academic year. We will also consider whether it is appropriate to place a student in the class late based on the learning that has been missed. If the student is transferring from another sixth form and was doing an equivalent course this will be taken into account in deciding whether a place can be offered.
- 4.4.2. In-year admissions forms can be obtained from Sixth Form team on 01621 787882.
- 4.4.3. If the academy refuses entry, the local authority may request a direction from the Education Funding Agency (on behalf of the Secretary of State). The decision of the Secretary of State will be binding upon the academy.

#### 4.5. Unsuccessful applications

- 4.5.1. The academy will inform the child's parent if a decision has been made to refuse their child a place at the academy for which they have applied, this will include the reason why admission was refused, information about the right to appeal, deadlines and contact details.

## Appendix 1

### Consultation Process

#### **1 October 2022**

The date at which academies **must** begin the six-week consultation period if any changes to the policy are being made.

#### **22 November 2022**

The last possible date that academies can submit their final policy to the Governance Team having closed consultation and made changes if necessary, in consultation with the LGB

#### **31 January 2023**

The date by which the Governance Team will return your admissions policy with confirmed approval

#### **28 February 2023**

The deadline by which academies **MUST** publish their 2024-2025 policy online and their appeals timetable on the academy website

#### **28 February 2023**

The deadline by which academies should send their admissions policy to their LA.

### What constitutes Consultation?

Consultation involves sending out the school's proposed admission policy **before** it is determined to invite comments or objections. Schools **MUST** consult with, i.e. send their proposed admissions policy to:

- Parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen
- Other person in the relevant area who in the opinion of the school have an interest in the proposed arrangements
- All other admission authorities within the relevant area (except that primary schools need not consult with secondary schools). This would include any other school in the borough which is their own admission authority.
- The local authority
- Any adjoining neighbouring local authority

Good practice would be to ask all your feeder primary schools to send out letters to parents, put a notice in your local paper, advertise the consultation in other local areas or community centres etc. Make a record of all the ways in which you ensured the community was informed of the consultation.

For the duration of the consultation period, the school **MUST** also publish a copy of their full proposed admission arrangements on their website together with details of the person within the school to whom comments may be sent and the areas on which comments are not sought. Schools **MUST** also send upon request a copy of the proposed policy to any of the person or bodies listed above inviting comment.

Failure to consult effectively may be grounds for subsequent complaints and appeals and so it pays to get the consultation right.

## Appendix 2.

### Admissions policy consultation letter

Address line one  
Address line two  
Town  
County  
Postcode  
Date

#### **RE: Consultation on admission arrangements**

Dear **interested party**,

I am writing to notify you of the upcoming consultation on the academy's admissions policy. The consultation period will run from 3rd October 2022 until 14th November 2022; during this time, parents are invited to express their views and any concerns about the [proposed changes to the] admission arrangements at name of academy.

In accordance with the DfE's 2021 statutory 'School Admissions Code' guidance, as a school we must consult on our admission arrangements when changes are proposed, and at least once every seven years.

#### **[Choose one of the two options set out below.]**

##### **[Changes are proposed]**

To this end, the following amendments to our admission arrangements have been proposed:

- [Brief outline of the key proposals, e.g. an increase in admission numbers]

This is being proposed as [state reason behind proposal, e.g. due to the rapid growth in the area, there has been an increased demand for school places].

A full version of the proposed changes to the admission arrangements, as well as the rationale behind them, is available to view on the academy website or in hard copy from the school office.

OR

[Changes are not proposed – this is the version to use if you are doing the statutory 7 year consultation]

For this reason, a consultation is currently being held to meet the academy's statutory duty; however, it should be noted that no changes to the current admission arrangements have been proposed.

[For either option, the following information should also be included.]

In accordance with statutory DfE guidance, the consultation will run for at least six weeks and, as an interested party at name of academy, we are keen to hear your views on the [proposed changes/current admission arrangements]; therefore, we invite you to participate in the consultation if you have any concerns regarding the matter.

All responses to the consultation should be made in writing and submitted before time on date to:

Address or email address.

Please note that written responses should outline your personal details, including your name, address and relationship to the academy. You are also encouraged to provide feedback on the academy website here: link to website.

At the end of the consultation period, the governing board will meet to consider responses and submit a final policy to the Ormiston Academies Trust Board of Trustees for approval.

For further information regarding the consultation process, please refer to our proposal document, copies of which can be located on the academy website or in hard copy from the school office. If you wish to further discuss this matter, or anything mentioned in this letter, please contact the school office on phone number or email address.

Yours sincerely,

Name

Principal

# Appendix 3.

## Priority Admissions Area for Ormiston Rivers Academy 2024/25

