



# **DISCOVERY PRIMARY ACADEMY**

## **Admissions Policy**

**In force with effect from September 2026**

**Presented to Full Trustees Meeting**

|                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Date reviewed:       | 12 December 2024  |
| Date of next review: | Reviewed Annually |

## **1.0 Introduction**

**1.1** Discovery Primary Academy is its own Admission authority. The Local Governing Committee of Discovery Primary Academy applies the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend the Academy. This policy conforms to the legislative requirements of the latest version of the School Admissions and School Admission Appeal Codes, which are issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The Academy is traditionally oversubscribed, therefore early dialogue is essential to ensure the best possibility of gaining a place within the school.

## **2.0 Aims and objectives**

**2.1** The Academy is an inclusive Academy that welcomes children from all backgrounds and abilities.

**2.2** All applications will be treated equally and sensitively.

**2.3** The only restriction in place on entry is that of numbers. If the number of children applying for entry exceeds the places available, the Academy will enforce the procedure set out below to determine whether a child is offered a place or not. It is the Academy's wish to allow parents the right to have a place at the school of their choice. However, this is not always possible, due to the excess demand for the school places available.

**2.4** The level of ability of a child or any special needs (apart from Education, Health and Care plans) that they may have, plays no part in the Admissions Policy of this school.

## **3.0 How parents can apply for their child to be admitted to Reception**

**3.1** As our school is an Academy, we have the flexibility to set bespoke admission arrangements. In reviewing best practices, the Academy decided to harmonise our admission arrangements in line with the Local Authority arrangements. The Academy however remains the 'Admissions Authority'. The policy and oversubscription criteria for entry to each school are published each year by the Local Authority. Parents can receive a copy of the policy and oversubscription criteria directly from the Local Authority.

**3.2** The Local Authority publishes a composite admissions prospectus each year, which gives information about how parents can apply for a place in the school of their choice.

Parents have a right to express a preference for the school of their choice and they should do so on the application form. Expressing a preference does not, in itself, guarantee a place at the Academy. Applications must be submitted online on the Local Authority admissions website. The closing date for all Reception intake applications is 15 January, the Academy strongly advises that parents do not delay their application in case of technical problems. National Offers Day is 16 April or the next working day should this fall on a weekend, parents who applied online can log on to the Local Authority website from 12.30 am to see which school their child has been offered. Letters will also be posted out on this day; no decision will be issued by phone.

**3.3** In this area, children enter school in the academic year in which they become five (5). There is one admission date per year, which is early in September (ie at the start of the school year). Therefore, parents who would like their child to be admitted to Discovery Primary Academy during the year their child is five (5) should ensure that they complete the necessary application form by the date set by the Academy each year, which will be the same as the date set by the Local Authority. Please see section seven (7) below for information about deferring and delaying a child's start to school.

**3.4** If a child is attending a pre-school, a nursery school or nursery class, this will not be taken into account when admission allocations are made. Attendance at any nursery class or pre-school on a school site does not result in any priority for admission to that school. Parents/carers whose children are attending nursery classes attached to primary schools must still apply for a place in Reception.

### **3.5 How parents can apply for their child to be admitted for Years 1 to 6**

Admission to the Academy for all other Year Groups (excluding new Reception intake) and in-year admissions are done by the Academy. Applications can be made by visiting the Academy to complete an application form. Full details of this can be found on the Discovery Primary Academy website in the admissions tab [Discovery Primary Academy website](#)

Any offer from the Academy will be open for one (1) week, after this date, it will be offered to the next person on the waiting list, unless advised of an exceptional circumstance. All offers and admission arrangements are now confirmed by the Discovery Primary Academy admissions committee regularly.

The Local Authority operates a fair access protocol for those children whose applications cannot be dealt with as part of the normal admissions process. The purpose of Fair Access Protocols is to ensure that outside the normal admissions round - unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are found and offered a place quickly so that the amount of time any child is out of school is kept to a minimum.

### **4.0 Admission appeals**

**4.1** If a child is not offered a place at the Academy, it is because to do so would prejudice the education of other children, as it would exceed the PAN (Published Admission Number).

**4.2** If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the school place allocation, they have the right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. If the parent wants to appeal for a place at more than one school, they will need to appeal separately for each. The parent can only appeal for a place at a school if they have applied and been refused a place. An appeal is a legal procedure, so there has to be a degree of formality to make sure everyone can put their case without interruption. Everyone involved is aware of how daunting it can be for parents and will try to make them feel as relaxed as possible (details of appeal arrangements can be found on the School Admissions Appeals section on the Peterborough City Council website). An appeals panel decision is binding for all parties concerned.

### **5.0 PAN (Published admission number)**

**5.1** PAN is the number of children that the Academy can accommodate. The standard number for the academy is sixty (60) pupils in Reception and Years 1,2 and 3, and the PAN for Years 4 through to Year 6 is 90. From September 2026, Year 4 to Year 6 will be capped at 60. This number is kept under review by the Trust who feel it would be prejudicial to the education of the children at the Academy to over-admit children into any Year Group.

### **6.0 Infant class size**

**6.1** Infant children (aged four (4) to seven (7)) are taught in classes that have a maximum number of thirty (30) children. Additional children may be admitted under exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an "excepted pupil" for the time that they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the maximum infant class size.

## **7.0 Deferring, Delaying and accelerated admission.**

### **7.1 Deferring admission**

If a parent chooses to defer admission to later in the academic year, they must discuss it with their allocated school when they accept the school place. Where a place is deferred, it cannot be given to another child, but the child must enter school by the beginning of the school term following their fifth (5th) birthday and within the school year for which the offer was made.

### **7.2 Delaying Admission**

If a child is “summer born” and parents prefer to delay admission to the following September, the child would normally be considered for admission into Year 1, rather than the Reception year. In exceptional circumstances, summer-born children may be admitted to school in a different Year Group. This will require the admission authority to take account of the child’s individual needs and abilities and to consider whether these can best be met in Reception or Year 1. It will also involve taking account of the potential impact on the child of being admitted to Year 1 without first having completed the Reception year. The views of the headteacher will be an important part of this consideration.

### **7.3 Accelerated admission**

There are some circumstances which mean that parents might feel that their child should start school a full academic year earlier, this is known as an accelerated admission into school, however, the Academy does not encourage this. In accordance with the Schools Admissions Code, all requests will be considered based on the circumstances of each case, and in the best interests of the child, taking account of the child’s educational and social development.

## **8.0 Admission and Oversubscription Criteria**

The Governors will admit children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which names the Academy. This will be in addition to any specific arrangements for specialist provision. Such criteria include, but are not limited to:

- i. Children in Care#;
- ii. Children who are both living in the catchment area served by the Academy (see Peterborough City Council website for an address list) and have a sibling\*;
- iii. Children of all staff at the Academy, providing that the member of staff has been employed for a minimum of two (2) years and/or are recruited to fill vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage.
- iv. Other children living in the catchment area at the time of application.
- v. Children who do not live in the catchment area served by the Academy, but who have a sibling of compulsory school age attending the school at the time of application.
- vi. Other children whose parents have requested a place (NB: measurements for this will be done from the Academy to the home address^). Measurements are done using the tool Google Maps, by measuring a straight line from the Academy to the home address of the applicant.

### **Definitions**

#### **#Children In Care**

Children in Care – Looked After Children’ and children who were previously looked after, but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order

Also children who appear to the Admission Authority to have been in state care (ie in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society) outside of England but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted only.

### **\*Siblings**

Are defined as children aged between 4 and 11, living together in the same family unit, who have a sibling on the roll of the school at the time of application and admission to the school. Sibling includes: brother or sister, half-brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, child of the parent/carer or their partner, children looked after, or previously looked after. This doesn't include children temporarily living in the same family unit - for example a looked after child in the short-term, or interim, foster placement. In every case, the sibling must be living permanently in the same family home (at least Monday to Friday) and must be on the roll of the school, or have been offered and accepted a place at the school at the time of application and when the child starts. Every effort will be made to ensure that twins and those from multiple births can be admitted together.

### **^Home address**

The child's current permanent residential address must be used. The home address is the address of the parent with whom the child normally lives from Monday to Friday at the time school places are allocated. This should also be the address where your child will be residing when they start school.

- The address of a relative or childminder, or where your child stays or sleeps because of special domestic arrangements or personal circumstances cannot be considered. All applicant addresses will be thoroughly checked.
- **You cannot use an address until you are permanently residing there and able to prove you have no connection with the previous address.** All changes of address will be thoroughly investigated to ensure there is a permanent commitment to the new address and that it is not a temporary arrangement to access a preferred school. **A temporary address cannot be considered. This includes other property owned by the applicant, temporary rental agreements and temporary moves to live with friends or family.**
- **Any recent change of principal carer and/or parental responsibility** (for example, if a child moves to live at another address) must be supported by satisfactory legal documents such as a court order. **Only applications from a person who is legally responsible for the child can be accepted.** If a child does not live with their parent/s and is looked after by relatives, documentary evidence such as a Will or a Court order are required as proof that the relatives are the child's guardians. A private fostering arrangement will not give parental responsibility. Please let Peterborough Admissions know if a parent at another address is to be kept advised of the progress and outcome of their child's application.
- Schools expect to see continuity of address throughout the application process; and you will be asked for proof at any time if your address is different from the address on your application.

If it is discovered that a place has been offered on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application (for example a false claim to residence), that offer will be withdrawn even if the child has started at the school.

## **9.0 Late Applications**

For late applications, the Local Authority will offer places in the same order of priority as above, once all the 'on time' requests have been considered.

The Academy will follow the Local Authority's coordinated scheme concerning the closing date for the receipt of the admission form.

Unsuccessful applicants have the right to appeal and details of the Appeals procedure can be found on the Peterborough City Council website in the [School Admissions Appeals](#) section.

## **10.0 Waiting Lists (the Academy deals with its in-year admissions)**

- 10.1** All parents who are refused a place at the Academy at any time may wish to place their child's name on a waiting list (NB: this does not affect a parent's right of appeal). Pupils will be placed on this list in strict order according to the oversubscription criteria on the Admissions Policy. If a place becomes available at the Academy, places will be allocated according to criteria. Time on the waiting list is not part of the criteria and has no bearing on the allocation of places. Parents must contact the Academy and request that their child's name be placed on the waiting list.

Details of the in-year process can be found on the Academy website [Discovery Primary Academy website](#)

- 10.2** The Academy will write to everyone on the waiting list in the summer term, confirming that they wish to remain on the Academy's list for the next academic year. If no response is received then, they will automatically be removed from the list. If they wish to go back on the list, then they must reapply to the Academy.
- 10.3** The Reception intake list is held by the Local Authority until the end of August in that academic year, at which point the Academy will write to everyone on the list to ask if they wish to transfer onto the Academy's In-year waiting list. If no response is received then, they will automatically be removed from the list.
- 10.4** In-year admissions are measured using the tool Google Maps by measuring a straight line from the Academy to the home address of the applicant.

Reception Intake is processed by the Local Authority In cases of equal merit, priority will be given to the child living nearest the school as measured by a straight line. Distance is measured in a straight line using the Local Land Property Gazetteer (LLPG) provided from the seed point located at the child's home address to the seed point for the school. The seed point is taken from the Ordnance Survey's (OS) Address-Base dataset. It is used to locate individual residential and school addresses using grid references as seed points.

It may be necessary to use other OS maps or online resources for any home address outside of the Peterborough local authority distance measuring system. In the case of flats, the priority is that of floor level ie, ground, first, second etc. in that order. In cases of the same measurement where no differentiation can be established, a lottery will be used to decide the allocation of the place. For late applications, the local authority will allocate places in the same order of priority. In cases of equal merit, priority will be given to the child living nearest the school as measured by a straight line as above.

- 10.5** When the Academy takes over the waiting list from the Local Authority the Academy will re-evaluate the measurements using the tool Google Maps, catchment will be decided using the Local Authorities catchment list.

## **11.0 Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually, in light of any changes to the Published Admission Numbers (PAN) and/or the over-subscription criteria. (A full consultation may be required for some of the changes).