



# Whitburn Church of England Academy

## Admissions Policy 2021

### Preface - Vision and values

*'But since you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete eagerness and in your love for us – see that you also excel in this grace of giving' (2 Corinthians 8:7)*

Our vision is rooted in this biblical teaching and is expressed through our school motto of 'Excellence for All'. At Whitburn C of E Academy we embrace Jesus' promise of *'life in all its fullness'* (**John 10:10**) and believe in this vision of human flourishing for all, permeated by key elements of wisdom, hope, community and dignity.

As Christians believe we are 'created in the image of God' (**Genesis 1:26f**), Whitburn C of E Academy, as an Anglican school, is unequivocal in our view that a good education must educate the **whole** person; we strive to ensure that all young people and adults in our community develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally, morally and socially.

We act in accordance with the belief that God wants us to excel both in our individual character and in our actions. This means seeking to be the very best we can be in all aspects of our lives, grounded in Whitburn's Christian 'Be Values' that are integral to our school community.

Light, a universal and powerful spiritual and divine symbol, is one that we embrace at Whitburn C of E Academy and, in harmony with our vision and values, we encourage all to *'let your light shine before others'*. (**Matthew 5:16**)

This policy and its associated procedures are based on these key principles and values.

**For the purpose of this document, the term "school" also applies to Academy.**

1. Decisions concerning the admissions of students to Academies and the attendant administrative procedures are the responsibility of the Governing Body.
2. Section 89 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, however, required that school Governors should consult the Local Authority (LA) on an annual basis, concerning the arrangements for the admissions.
3. The general admission arrangements of the LA for all schools, including academies, are set out in the booklet 'Information for Parents School Education' in September 2020.
4. The Academy will admit students in accordance with the Local Authority's coordinated admissions scheme. (*Link to the scheme is available via the South Tyneside Council website*).
5. The Academy will normally admit students who have named Whitburn Church of England Academy (described as 'the Academy' in the remainder of this document), in the following order of priority:

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan naming the school will always be offered places. If there is a greater demand for admission than there are places available, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below:

The Academy operates an equal preference system which means that all first, second and third preference applications are considered equally against the following criteria.

- a. “Looked-after children and children who were previously looked after, but ceased to be so because, immediately after being looked after, they became subject to an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order (see Note 1) including children previously in state care outside of England who have ceased to be in that state care as a result of being adopted (See Note 2).
- b. Children who have a sibling link and are residing at the same address (brother or sister including adoptive siblings, half siblings, step siblings, and long term fostered children) attending the Academy at the time of application (*see note 3*).
- c. Students from Cleadon Church of England Academy, Marsden Primary, Whitburn Village Primary and East Boldon Junior Schools.
- d. Other children who live the shortest distance measured as a straight line, from the Ordnance Survey coordinates for the parental home residence (including flats) to the main academy entrance, using South Tyneside Council’s Geographic Information System (GIS), with those living closer to the Academy receiving higher priority (*see note 4*).

The above distance measurement will also be used as a ‘tiebreaker’ within each criterion if necessary. Where there are places available for some, but not all applicants within a particular criterion, distance from the shortest distance measured as a straight line, from the Ordnance Survey coordinates for the parental home residence (including flats) to the main academy entrance, using South Tyneside Council’s Geographic Information System (GIS), with those living closer to the Academy receiving higher priority will be used. The Academy will seek proof of residency.

### **Final tiebreaker**

Where two or more applicants meet the same admission criteria and the measured distance between home and school is the same to 3 decimal places, the tiebreaker will be a random allocation and will be by the drawing of lots to determine the rank order for each child. In order to ensure fairness the School Admissions Team will administer the random allocation system overseen by an independent adjudicator in accordance with the random allocation procedure.

In determining admissions, priority would be given to those applications where the parental application form is received by the published deadline date.

Once a place at the Academy has been offered and accepted, the Academy require sight of the child’s birth certificate to verify the identity of the child. Where a birth certificate may not be available for children arriving from overseas, the Border Agency may be contacted to verify the child’s details.

**Note 1:**

By a “looked-after child” we mean one in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of its social services function. An adoption order is one made under the Adoption Act 1976 (Section 12) or the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (Section 46). A ‘child arrangements order’ is one settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live (Children Act 1989, Section 8, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014, Section 14). A ‘special guardianship order’ is one appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian/s (Children Act 1989, Section 14A). Applications under this criterion must be accompanied by evidence to show that the child is looked after or was previously looked after (e.g. a copy of the adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order).

We give a “Looked after Child” priority in our oversubscription criteria. This means that when a place becomes available in the school year it can be offered to these children to ensure that they are quickly placed in an appropriate school.

This is necessary as it is recognised that such children are a disadvantaged group who, because of frequent changes of school following their care placements, may have lower than average levels of attainment. It is also a statutory requirement that Admission Authorities give top priority to a “Looked after Child” in their oversubscription criteria.

**Note 2**

Children previously in state care outside of England means children who have been looked after outside of England by a public authority, a religious organisation or another provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. The care may have been provided in orphanages or other settings. In the case of children adopted from state care overseas, the admissions authority will require evidence that a child is eligible by asking the child’s parents or carers for appropriate evidence of their previously looked-after status.

**Note 3**

If your child has an older brother or sister residing at the same address (including adoptive siblings, half siblings, step siblings, and long term fostered children) attending the Academy at the time of application the Governing Body will consider this as a sibling link. The Governing Body will not consider any “reverse sibling links” i.e. a younger child gaining entry to the school will not mean an automatic place for an older sibling.

**Note 4**

A student’s home address is considered to be a residential property that is the child’s only or main residence, and is either:

- Owned by the child’s parent(s) or the person with parental responsibility for the child; or
- Leased to or rented by the child’s parent(s) or the person with parental responsibility under a lease or written rental agreement of not less than twelve months duration. Evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required, plus proof of permanent residence at the property concerned.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives with both parents for part of the week then the main residence will be determined as the address where the child lives the majority of the school week. Parents may be requested to supply documentary evidence to support the address used when offering places.

### **Year 6 to Year 7 Transfer - Waiting Lists**

In accordance with the published admission number (PAN) the Academy will admit a total of 205 students to Year 7 in September 2021.

If you have been refused a place at Whitburn Church of England Academy, you will have the opportunity to place your child's name on a waiting list if you have ranked the school as a higher preference than the one you have been offered. Waiting lists are established after Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2021 (you should contact the Academy to request that your child's name is placed on the waiting list as this is not an automatic procedure). Children are placed on the waiting list according to the oversubscription criteria regardless of when their application was received and within each criterion their place is ordered by the shortest distance measured as a straight line, from the Ordnance Survey coordinates for the parental home residence (including flats) to the main academy entrance, using South Tyneside Council's Geographic Information System (GIS), with those living closer to the Academy receiving higher priority. The Academy will request proof of residency for parents/carers who wish their child's name to be placed on the waiting list.

If student numbers fall below the published admission number the place will be offered to the child at the top of the waiting list. A child who is on the waiting list will move down the list if another late application is received that falls within a higher priority under the oversubscription criteria.

Waiting lists will be held for one term in the academic year i.e. September 2021 until 31st December 2021; no lists will be kept after this date.

Children who are the subject of a 'direction to admit' by a local authority or who are allocated to Whitburn Church of England Academy in full accordance with the agreed Local Authority In-Year Fair Access Protocol take precedence over those on the waiting list. (*Link to the protocol is available via the South Tyneside Council website*).

### **Withdrawing Offers of a School Place**

When considering your application, only the address of the parent/carer with whom the child normally resides will be taken into account (a parent/carer means any person who holds parental responsibility, **and** with whom the child normally resides). The address of childminders or other relatives or friends who may help you look after your child must not be used on your application. We reserve the right to seek proof of your address and it should be noted that an offer of a place may be withdrawn if information supplied by you on your application is intentionally misleading or fraudulent (for example, a false claim to residence). Where a place is withdrawn, your application will be considered afresh, and the right to appeal offered if a place is refused.

## **In-Year Admissions**

An “in-year admission” means any application for a place other than the normal year of entry, i.e. outside the normal Year 6 to 7 transfer.

Where a place is available in the requested year group the Academy will offer this immediately and seek to transfer the child as soon as possible and within the required 20 days. The child and parents/carers will be given an induction meeting and the child will follow a closely monitored Induction Programme for a period of 6 weeks to ensure the child settles quickly into the life of the Academy. Children who fall under the agreed Local Authority Fair Access Protocol will follow the same programme of induction.

## **Transfer to post-16 provision**

The Academy will make every effort to support the transition of all students to their post-16 placement. Where students are identified to be vulnerable or to have specific learning needs, the Academy will continue to support the transition where possible through appropriate liaison.

## **Parental Responsibility**

Who is a ‘parent’ in relation to education legislation? Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines the term ‘parent’ as:

- All natural parents married or not
- Any person who has got ‘parental’ responsibility (we will require documentary evidence)
- Any person without being a natural parent or having ‘parental responsibility’ who has care of the student (we will require documentary evidence)

## **At What Age Does my Child Transfer into Secondary School?**

Every parent whose child is in their last year of Junior or Primary education (Year 6) whose date of birth is between 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 will need to complete an application for admission into Secondary School.

Most children will be admitted to a school within their own age group but it is possible for you to request a place outside your child’s normal age group. This might be because you have a particularly gifted and talented child, or your child has missed part of a year maybe due to ill health.

This option should be discussed with the Academy’s Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and an Educational Psychologist. We will consider such requests on the basis of the circumstances of each individual child and in consultation with the appropriate colleagues and with the written recommendation of an Educational Psychologist.

If a place in the requested age group is refused, but one in the normal age group is offered then there is no right of appeal.