

MULBERRY STEPNEY GREEN MATHS, COMPUTING & SCIENCE COLLEGE

ADMISSION POLICY

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PROTOCOL FOR MID-TERM ADMISSIONS

Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of the School Admissions Code of Practice and latest Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Guidance on Hard to Place pupils, the Tower Hamlets Admission Forum and the local education authority are adopting a protocol for all schools to deal with applications for admission at mid-term. This follows a period of full consultation.

This protocol is for both primary and secondary schools, voluntary aided, voluntary controlled and community. It seeks to find a balance between the need to ensure that pupils are placed in school quickly and the need to plan the admission of 'hard to place' pupils properly. It is based on the principles of honesty and transparency about pupils and their circumstances.

Pupils with statements of special educational needs are not subject to the mid-term admission protocol as the procedures for the admission of these pupils are governed by the 1996 Education Act and its accompanying Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs.

Mid Term Admissions

Mid-term admissions are children for whom a school place is being sought outside of the normal admission round (i.e. late applications) or in a year other than the normal year of entry.

Types of Mid Term Admission

Most applications for mid-term admission are for children who:

- have newly arrived from abroad or elsewhere in the UK
- are returning from extended leave
- have been rehoused
- have been placed in the care of a Local Authority (LA)
- are transferring from another school
- are transferring from another school within Tower Hamlets
- are subject to Managed Moves
- are attending the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and need to be reintegrated back into mainstream school
- who are returning to school after a period of home education.

There are other mid-term admissions defined by the DfES as 'hard to place'.

These include children who:

- have been permanently excluded from a previous school
- are out of school as a result of being withdrawn by their family, following a fixed term exclusion.
- have been out of education for longer than one school term
- are refugees and asylum seekers
- are homeless
- have unsupportive family backgrounds, where a school place has not been sought
- are known to the police or other agencies
- do not have a school place and have a history of attendance problems.

The requirement for schools to have an Admissions Co-ordinator

Schools should nominate a named person and a deputy who will be responsible for co-ordinating mid-term admissions arrangements as follows:

- notifying the Pupil Services Team of the school vacancy position on a regular basis
- receiving and dealing with applications from parents and carers
- dealing with admission enquiries from the LA
- ensuring that applicants and the Pupil Services Team are notified of the outcome of applications as soon as possible and not later than 5 school days
- ensuring that applicants refused places are advised in writing of their right of appeal
- raising with the Pupil Services Manager or Head of Pupil and Student Services any concerns that may militate against admitting a pupil within the specified time periods
- providing the Pupil Services Team with the information necessary for the LA to process appeals on behalf of community and voluntary controlled schools.
- dealing promptly with all requests for pupil records from other schools.

Receiving applications from parents and carers

It is normally parents who apply for school places. Where the local authority makes an approach, this will normally be by Pupil Services or the Attendance and Welfare Service. Schools can expect LA officers to provide background information on a proforma. The School Admissions Co-ordinator should ensure that the following arrangements are in place:

- parents are given information on the vacancy position at the school and are advised of their right to apply regardless of whether or not there is an available place.
- that there is a form on which parents and carers can apply for a child's admission and that the form collects all the information that is necessary for the school to determine the application. Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools must use the LA's PA1 form. [The application form will be needed if the parent appeals].
- that the application form includes a monitoring questionnaire that will enable the school to collect information for equalities monitoring purposes.
- that the school checks that the application is bonafide and seeks verification of information such as the child's address, child's age, full names of parents / carers and contact details. If

the school is concerned about the nature of the relationship between the applicant and child it should contact the Pupil Services Manager or Head of Pupil and Student Services for advice.

- that there is a formal system for confirming the receipt of applications, advising applicants on what will happen next and when they can expect to hear the outcome. The LA can provide schools with a leaflet for this purpose.

Making Decisions on Applications

A decision must be taken on all applications. If there is a vacancy in the appropriate year group the child should be admitted to the school without delay, i.e. within 5 school days unless the pupil is “hard to place” where a maximum of 15 school days is allowed to plan admission.

Admissions Co-ordinators should contact Pupil Services before filling vacancies arising from permanent exclusions for pupils with priority to be identified for admission.

In cases where a school anticipates not being able to admit within the 5 or 15 day period they should consult the Pupil Services Manager or the Head of Pupil and Student Services.

If there are more applications than places available the school must use the admission criteria to determine which pupil(s) should be offered a place. **(Schools that use the LA admission policy must apply the primary or secondary school admission criteria as appropriate).**

If a place cannot be offered the application should be treated as a refusal and the parents/carers must be informed in writing of this and of their right of appeal. The PA1 fulfils this purpose. Offering to place a name on the waiting list must also be treated as a refusal and the parent should receive a refusal notification.

With the exception of pupils with statements of SEN or pupils who have twice been permanently excluded from a previous school there are no lawful circumstances in which a child’s admission can be delayed.

Delaying Admission

Schools may not refuse to admit pupils, impose conditions or seek to delay admission, including for any of these reasons:

- until information such as the school record is received,
- until a suitable programme of support or the parent’s/carers’ signature on a home/school agreement is obtained,
- in the case of pupils in Years 2, 6 and 9 until after the SATS have been completed.

Deferring Decisions

Applications for VA schools are normally referred to a governors' committee. If the committee is not able to meet within 5 days of an application, it is recommended that the decision should be taken under Chair’s action.

Years 10 and 11

For Year 10 and 11 pupils admission should not be subject to the availability of GCSE options. Pupils in Year 11 must be considered for admission throughout the academic year. There is therefore no 'cut-off' date for the admission of Year 11 pupils.

Interviews

An offer of a place cannot be subject to a family's attendance or performance at an interview. Interviews should be used solely for the purposes of ensuring proper arrangements are put in place to support the pupil on entry to the school.

Pre – Pupil Level Annual Census (PLASC) Admissions

A significant number of transfers take place during the period leading up to the January PLASC return. It is therefore important that when pupils transfer from one Tower Hamlets school to another, the school offering a place contacts the current school before making the offer. This gives the school losing the pupil maximum opportunity to fill the vacancy from their waiting list or to contact Pupil Services for match. (See LA admissions guidance for further detail).

Pupils Referred by the Social Inclusion Panel

Permanently excluded pupils and pupils in the PRU will normally be referred for admission by the LA's Social Inclusion Panel (SIP). Where appropriate these pupils will have a support package to assist integration. Pupils referred from the PRU who have not been permanently excluded should be admitted within five school days. Permanently excluded pupils referred by SIP are given priority after Looked after Children in the LA's admission policy.

Direct requests from parents for the admission of permanently excluded pupils do not receive priority under the admission policy.

'Hard to Place' Pupils

Pupils considered 'Hard to Place' as defined on pages 1 and 2 should be admitted to school with the minimum of delay and no more than 15 school days from the date of the decision. During this time schools can make contact with appropriate agencies to obtain information and plan a pupil's integration properly. The LA can provide a list agencies that can provide advice and support to schools.

Admissions Co-ordinators should ensure that pupil records are forwarded without delay. The PRU, Pupil Services and Attendance and Welfare Service must ensure that schools are provided with the known background information

Children for whom a transfer of school is being sought

The current school should be informed by the school the parent has applied to that an application has been received before a place is offered. This allows the current school to review the parent/carer's reasons for requesting a move and the opportunity to resolve any issues within the school or home so as to avert avoidable disruption to the child's education.

For primary schools parents applying to transfer their child from one Tower Hamlets School to another are requested to complete a transfer slip. The transfer slip allows schools and governors to monitor the reasons for pupil movement. The acquisition of a transfer slip cannot however be a condition for admission. Heads should consider transfer requests twice a term. Pupils are expected to transfer at the beginning of a half-term unless there are exceptional reasons for a mid-term transfer or the family has moved within the borough and it cannot be reasonably expected for the child to continue to attend the current school (see guidance on primary admissions). If there are more applications than places available, the admission policy should be used to determine the priority for admission. If the school is unable to offer a place the parents/carers should be informed in writing of the reason for refusing admission and the right of appeal.

For secondary schools the LBTH Transfer/Managed Move form should be completed by the current school prior to the transfer proceeding. A transfer date should be agreed by the prospective headteachers or their representatives. This will normally be for the start of the following half-term. In cases where it is felt that an earlier transfer is necessary this can be handled as a 'managed move' (see below). A pupil must not be removed from a school roll until such time as the receiving school confirms that the pupil has started with them.

Managed Moves

Where it is agreed by the parents/carers that it would be in a pupil's best interests to move school, Headteachers can make arrangements with one another for the child to transfer. Headteachers can provide the Pupil Services Manager or Head of Pupil and Student Services with the details of pupils for whom a managed move is sought. Pupil Services will then inform schools of "matched" pupils for exchange. Further advice is available in the LA guidance on Managed Moves.

Once the Managed Move form has been completed and it has been agreed by all parties, including the pupil, a start date should be arranged as soon as possible. 15 days can be allowed for planning and practical arrangements. **For the 'hard to place' pupils the child must remain on the roll of the originating school and continue to attend there until the agreed start date at the new school.** Pupils are officially on roll as soon as they start at the new school; there can be no "trial periods", pupils cannot be returned to the previous school and can only be taken off roll where permitted by law (see impending LEA "Guidance on Attendance Registers July 2006).

Where there is no vacancy schools can affect a managed move by agreeing a pupil exchange.

Informing Parents/Carers of the outcome of applications and notifying the LA

Schools must ensure that they notify the parents/carer of the outcome of their application within 5 school days. The PA1 should be completed, signed, dated and issued by the school as soon as the decision has been taken. VA schools will have their own application forms and refusal letters.

Offering a Place

When a place is being offered the Admissions Co-ordinator should contact the parent by telephone and arrange an admission date. This should be confirmed in writing within the 5 or 15 day period, whichever is appropriate. The parents' copy of the PA1 should also accompany the letter.

Refusing a Place

If the school is full in the appropriate year group then a place should be refused and the Admissions Co-ordinator must inform the parent/carer in writing within 5 school days. The letter should include the parent copy of the PA1 (where applicable) and must explain the following:

- the reason why the place has been refused
- the arrangements for securing a place on the school's waiting list. For schools that use the LA's admissions policy, this will be confirmation that the child's name has been placed on the waiting list
- the right for the parent/carer to appeal against the decision
- how to obtain an appeal form
- the latest date by which an appeal can be lodged (21 days for community and voluntary controlled schools)
- the contact number for Pupil Services who will advise of alternative places or provision

Notifying the LA

The Admissions Co-ordinator should inform the LA's Pupil Services Team of the outcome of an application by sending a copy of the PA1 with the section indicating whether or not a place can be offered completed. The Admissions Co-ordinator for a voluntary aided school should send or email a copy of the offer/refusal letter including the child's details. The PA1 or letter should be sent to Pupil Services on the same day that the decision is taken to ensure that children are not left without education.

Appeals

When pupils are refused admission parents must be given the right to appeal. Appeals for schools that use the LA's admission policy are arranged through the Pupil Services Team and heard by the Independent Appeal Panel (IAP). Pupil Services will request information from Admissions Co-ordinators in order to prepare the LEA's statement of case to the IAP. The Headteacher will receive a copy of the draft statement for comments and to confirm the accuracy of the information and will be invited to attend the hearing on behalf of the school. Further information on the appeal process is provided in the guidance notes that accompany the LA appeal form.

Monitoring Arrangements

The Pupil Services Team is responsible for ensuring that every Tower Hamlets pupil has an offer of school place. Headteachers will assist this process by ensuring that Admission Co-ordinators carry out their responsibilities.

On receiving information that a pupil is out of school Pupil Services will identify the nearest suitable school(s) with a vacancy and advise the parent/carers. Pupil Services will then follow up this initial contact to ensure that the pupil is admitted to school. In cases where parents fail or refuse to admit their children within 20 school days Pupil Services will refer the case to the LA's Attendance and Welfare Service.

The LA will monitor the effect of the mid-term admissions protocol by providing regular reports to the Admission Forum. The Admission Forum includes representation from Headteachers, the Diocesan Authorities, Council of Mosques, Parent Governors, Community Representatives and LEA Officers.

POST 16 ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR STEPNEY GREEN MATHS, COMPUTING & SCIENCE COLLEGE

Stepney Green Maths, Computing & Science College welcomes applications for admission to further education courses from all students.

General arrangements and entry requirements

Stepney Green Maths, Computing & Science College will aim to provide a full programme of study. Students will be considered for entry provided they meet the course entry requirements. The individual subjects have their own specific criteria and student's suitability for courses will be decided at an admissions meeting with school staff. Students who do not fulfil the entry criteria for the chosen courses or subjects, or whose chosen post 16 pathway or course, cannot be accommodated by the school, will be guided onto the most appropriate alternative course or subjects.

All students will be required to sign a learning agreement that outlines the commitment expected for successful study at post 16. Parents will also be asked to sign the learning agreement.

Availability of Places

There is capacity for a maximum total of 340 students in years 12 and 13, including external candidates. The number of places available to students has been determined by taking into account the following:

- Availability of accommodation
- Availability of teaching and other resources
- Capacity of individual courses
- Curriculum balance across the School
- The popularity of subjects applied for (if there is a very low uptake for a particular course it may not be viable to run)

Applying for entry

Applications to Stepney Green Maths, Computing & Science College must be made on the school's application form.

During the application period, school staff will be available to guide students onto the most appropriate course that meets the student's long term interests and or career plans.

Following the closing date, an admission meeting will be held with the student to provide further advice on options and entry requirements to particular courses. Although the admission meeting is important to assess a student's suitability for entry to a particular course it will not determine a student's eligibility for entry to the sixth form. Applications will be considered by the Deputy Head Sixth Form and Head of Key Stage 5. External applicants will be asked to declare that the address used will be their place of residence beyond the date of the student starting at the school. The offer of a place may be withdrawn if false or misleading information is given.

Allocation of places (oversubscription criteria)

In the case of oversubscription for a place on a particular course, places will be offered first to students within the school. External applicants will be offered places using the same criteria as the main school.

Students with an EHCP that name Stepney Green Maths, Computing & Science College must be considered before other applicants. The following criteria will then be used to allocate the remaining places on those courses that receive more applications meeting the course entry qualifications than can be accommodated, in descending order of priority:

- 'looked after children and those who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order'
- Students who meet the academic requirements for the level of course applied for, as published in the school prospectus. If taking a new subject in the Sixth Form, show interest in, commitment to, and some ability or skill in a related area.
- Students who are deemed to have an exceptional medical or social need following consideration of supporting evidence presented from an appropriate medical or social care professional.
- All other applicants. In the event of over-subscription within this criterion priority will be determined in order of straight-line distance from home to school. (See note 1).

Note 1: In the event of this category being oversubscribed, proximity to the school will be used. Straight line distance is measured from the centre point of the address to the centre point of the school entrance, as determined by Tower Hamlets Council's Geographical Information System. Distances measured by other means i.e. private car, pedometer or internet websites are likely to result in different calculations that should not be relied upon as evidence that the local authority's distance calculation is incorrect. Where applicants have identical distance measurements, priority amongst them will be determined at random.

1 Available places are those places available after existing students have indicated their preference against their entitlement.

Address Verification

When families move, documentary evidence of the move must be provided e.g. tenancy agreement or exchange of contracts. Where it is claimed a student is resident at more than one address, applicants will be required to provide justification and evidence of a family's circumstances (e.g. legal separation). If a student spends part of the week with parents at different addresses, the home address will be where they usually spend the majority of the school week with a parent.

Late Applications

If an application is received after the deadline and before the date applicants are notified of places, this will be considered 'late'. Late applications will be considered after the allocation of places and notified after the main allocation date, unless exceptional circumstances apply, e.g. hospitalisation of a parent or a family has just moved into the area. In such instances, evidence will be required.

Applications received after the normal admissions round

Applications received after the notification date will be considered as an 'in year' application. Places will only be offered if places on requested courses are available and the student meets academic requirements of the course.

Multiple births or siblings with birth dates in the same academic year

Allocation of places is based on individual students meeting the requirements of their chosen course. No guarantee of a place is given to other siblings applying to the school from the same family.

Accepting or declining the offer of a place

Places are offered on the understanding that there is a commitment to meet the academic requirements of the course. Applicants are required to accept or decline the allocated place. Decision must be e mailed to the school **within two weeks** from the date of the offer. If not received, there will be one further offer, warning that failure to respond may result in the place being withdrawn. Applicants are requested to advise the school at any stage, if you are not accepting the place for any reason.

Students for whom a place is offered and accepted will have it confirmed when examination results are published in August.

Changing subjects

The course selection process is detailed and tailored to the individual student so it is not expected that students will want to change their subject choices after their admission meeting. However, where there is a valid case, subject changes will only happen after GCSE results are published and until two weeks into teaching time. Changing subjects any later than this is very difficult and students are unlikely to catch up with work missed.

Appeals

Parents or the prospective student have the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel if a place is refused. You **must** state your reasons/grounds for appealing or your appeal will not be considered.

All appeals are to be submitted to
Mr Paramjit Bhutta
The Head Teacher
Stepney Green Maths, Computing & Science College
Ben Jonson Road
London
E1 4SD
0207 790 6361

Timetable (General)

Sixth form prospectus issued from 1st September

Application forms available from 1st Nov

Open days – During Nov

Deadline for completed applications - Dec

Dates for 6th Form Admission meetings: – During Jan

Date conditional offers sent: Feb

Closing date for acceptance of conditional offer – 14 days from the date offer letter is sent

Closing date for appeals - 14 days from the date of the refusal letter is sent.

Dates between which appeals are heard: May - June

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by School Committee.