

Park Mead Primary School Policy for Admissions, September 2020

1. Introduction

As Park Mead Primary School is a foundation school, the school governors determine the admission arrangements following consultation with the Local Authority (LA), other schools and parents in accordance with the School Admissions Code. The school participates in the local authority co-ordinated admissions scheme where an equal preference scheme operates. In accordance with current legislative requirements, the governing body is committed to a policy of open admission to the school without any selection or discrimination on grounds of pupils' academic achievement, race, disability, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation or gender reassignment.

2. How Parents/Primary Carers Can Apply for Their Child to be Admitted

The LA publishes an admissions booklet each year, which gives information about how parents can apply for a place in the school of their preference. Parents/Primary Carers have a right to express a preference for a school and they should do so on-line or on the application form, in accordance with the LA arrangements. Expressing a preference does not, in itself, guarantee a place at Park Mead Primary School. Parents should follow the online application process for admissions which is located at www.surreycc.gov.uk/admissions. This should be completed by the date stipulated by the LA. The LA will notify parents of the school place allocated for their child on the date specified.

All children whose Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) names Park Mead Primary School will be allocated a place before other children are considered. In this way, the number of places available will be reduced by the number of children with an EHCP that have named Park Mead Primary School.

The only restriction we place on entry is that of number. If the number of children applying for entry exceeds the places available, we shall enforce the procedure set out below in order to determine whether a child is accepted or not. It is our wish to allow parents the right to have a place at the school of their preference. However, this is not always possible, when there is excess demand on the school places available.

Details of term starting dates are published on the school web site.

3. Over Subscription

The Published Admission Number (PAN) is the number of children admitted to the school which takes into account the number the school building can accommodate. The number for Park Mead Primary School for admission to the Reception year, at 4+, is 60. We keep this number under review and the governors may apply to change the number if circumstances change. All classes will have a maximum number of 30 children unless certain limited exceptional circumstances apply. The excepted children are:

- a) children admitted outside the normal admissions round with Educational Health and Care Plans (EHCP) specifying the school;
- b) looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round;

- c) children admitted, after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admission authority (i.e. the school) or local authority in the original application process;
- d) children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal;
- e) children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance;
- f) children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round (subject to the decision of the admissions authority i.e. the school);
- g) children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil (subject to the decision of the admissions authority i.e. the school);
- h) children with special educational needs who are normally taught in a special educational needs unit attached to the school or registered at a special school, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school.

If the number of applications is larger than the PAN on the closing date for applying for a school place as defined by the LA (so that the school is oversubscribed) the Governors will allocate places up to the PAN in accordance with the priorities set out below and in the order in which they are shown. The priorities, in order are:

1st *Children Looked After and previously Children Looked After* defined as:

- children who are registered as being in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989(a), e.g. fostered or living in a children's home, at the time an application for a school place is made; and
- children who have previously been in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989(a) and who have left that care through adoption, a child arrangements order (in accordance with Section 8 of the Children's Act 1989 and as amended by the Children and families Act 2014) or special guardianship order (in accordance with Section 14A of the Children Act 1989). Children who were previously in state care outside of England, and have ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted, may be considered under this criterion. A child will be regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society. The parent/carer will need to provide evidence to demonstrate that the child was in state care outside of England and left that care as a result of being adopted.'

2nd *Exceptional social/medical need*

Occasionally there will be a very small number of children for whom exceptional social or medical circumstances apply which will warrant a placement at Park Mead Primary School. The exceptional social or medical circumstances might relate to either the child or the parent/carer. Supporting evidence from a professional is required such as a doctor and/or consultant for medical cases or a social worker, health visitor, housing officer, the police or probation officer for

other social circumstances. This evidence must confirm the circumstances of the case and must set out why the child should attend Park Mead Primary School and why no other school could meet the child's needs. Providing evidence does not guarantee that a child will be given priority and in each case a decision will be based on the merits of the application. The Governors' Resources Committee (responsible for Admissions) will be the arbiter of what constitutes exceptional arrangements.

3rd *Siblings*

A child will be given sibling priority if they have a sibling on roll at Park Mead and that sibling is still expected to be on roll at Park Mead at the time of the child's admission. A sibling will be considered to be a brother or sister (that is, another child of the same parents, whether living at the same address or not), a half-brother or half-sister, an adoptive brother or sister, a fostered brother or sister or a step-brother or step-sister. Couples with children who are not brothers and sisters but are living together at the same address as a family unit are also eligible for sibling priority.

4th *All Other Applicants*

Proximity of the child's home to the school with those living nearer being accorded the higher priority. The distance is measured in a straight line from the address point of the pupil's home, as set by Ordnance Survey, to the nearest school gate available for pupils to use. This is calculated using Surrey County Council's Admission Team's Geographical Information System.

The Child's home address excludes any business, relative's or childminder's address and must be the child's normal place of residence.

Where the child is subject to a child arrangements order and that order stipulates that the child will live with one parent/carer more than the other, the address to be used will be the one where the child is expected to live for the majority of the time. For other children, the address to be used will be the address where the child lives for the majority of the time. In other cases, where the child spends an equal time between their parents/carers, it will be up to the parents/carers to agree which address to use. Where a child spends their time equally between their parents/carers and they cannot agree on who should make the application, we will accept an application from the parent/carer who is registered for child benefit. If neither parent/carer is registered for child benefit we will accept the application from the parent/carer whose address is registered with the child's current school or nursery.

We will not generally accept a temporary address if the main carer of the child still possesses or rents a property that has previously been used as a home address, nor will we accept a temporary address if we believe it has been used solely or mainly to obtain a school place when an alternative address is still available to that child.

In the case of multiple births, where children are ranked consecutively in their order of priority for a place and there are not sufficient vacancies remaining for each of them, wherever it is logistically possible, each child will be offered a place. Where it is not logistically possible to offer each child a place the child(ren) to be offered the last remaining place(s) will be determined by their rank position.

Tie Breaker

Proximity from home to school will apply within each category as a means of prioritising places on the list, with those living nearer the school being accorded the higher priority. Where more than one child is equidistant from the school, a lottery will be used to prioritise a place. This will be performed in front of invited independent witnesses. In the case of multiple births, where children have equal priority for a place, we will use random allocation to determine which child should be given priority

4. Deferred Entry

Applicants can defer their child's entry to Reception until later in the school year, but this will not be agreed beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday nor beyond the beginning of the final term of the academic year for which the offer was made. Applicants may also arrange for their child to start part-time until their child reaches statutory school age.

5. Late Applications

Any application received after the closing date defined by the LA should be made to the LA. Such applications will be dealt with by the school after all on-time applications have been considered. Should insufficient places be available, late applications will be added to the waiting list.

6. The Admission of Children Out of their Chronological Year Group

Applicants may choose to seek a place outside their child's chronological (correct) year group. Decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and what is in the best interests of the child concerned.

Applicants who are applying for their child to have a decelerated entry to school, i.e. to start later than other children in their chronological year group, should initially apply for a school place in accordance with the deadlines that apply for their child's chronological age. If, in liaison with the Headteacher, governors agree for the child to have a decelerated entry to the school the place cannot be deferred and instead the applicant will be invited to apply again in the following year for the decelerated cohort

Applicants who are applying for their child to have an accelerated entry to school, i.e. to start earlier than other children in their chronological age group, must initially apply for a school place at the same time that other families are applying for that cohort. If, in liaison with the Headteacher, governors agree for the child to have an accelerated entry to the school, the application will be processed. If it is not agreed for the child to have an accelerated entry to the school, the applicant will be invited to apply again in the following year for the correct cohort.

Applicants must state clearly why they feel admission to a different year group is in the child's best interest and provide what evidence they have to support this. More information on educating children out of their chronological year group and the process for making such requests is available at www.surreycc.gov.uk/admissions.

7. In-year Admissions

In-year admissions will be managed in accordance with arrangements agreed with the LA.

8. Waiting List

Where there are more children than places available, waiting lists will operate for each year group according to the oversubscription priorities above without regard to the date the application was received or when a child's name was added to the waiting list.

Should a place become available at any time then places will be offered to children on the waiting list using the oversubscription priorities as above, except in the following circumstance:

If twins, triplets or other multiple births are at the top of the waiting list and only one place becomes available, the other sibling(s) will remain at the top of the waiting list until they can be offered a place, even if another child moves into the area with a higher priority.

Waiting lists will be maintained until the last day of the summer term 2020 when they will be cancelled. Applicants who wish a child to remain on the waiting list after this date must apply for in-year admission through Surrey County Council.

9. Admission Appeals

Parents or primary carers have the right to appeal against a decision to refuse entry and they can do so by applying in writing to the school and an independent appeals panel will be arranged. An appeals panel will then meet to consider all appeals by parents/primary carers who have been refused a place at our school and who wish to appeal against this decision. An appeals panel's decision is binding for all parties concerned. If the appeals panel decides that we should admit a child to our school, then we will accept this and continue to do all we can to provide the best education for all the children at our school. Details of appeal arrangements are set out in the School Admission Appeals Code, which came into force on 1 February 2012.

10. Providing False or Misleading Information

If an applicant is found to have supplied false or deliberately misleading information or to have withheld any relevant information, we reserve the right to withdraw any offer of a place, even if the child has already started school.

11. Home to School Transport

Surrey County Council has a Home to School Transport Policy that sets out the circumstances under which children might qualify for free home to school transport. This is available on Surrey's website at www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/school-transport

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually in the light of any changed circumstances in our school or the local area.

Approved by Governing Body: spring 2018