



Unity Primary Academy admission arrangements for 2018/19

Unity Primary Academy is in Colchester in Essex and is part of REACH2 Academy Trust. This admissions policy was finalised following public consultation on a Trust-wide approach to admissions. Our aim is to ensure all our academies have simple, consistent admissions arrangements that focus on serving the local community, reflect our vision and values and are as easy as possible for parents/carers of potential pupils to understand. More information about REACH2 is available on our website: www.reach2.org

Unity Primary Academy is a two-form entry primary school serving the Greenstead community and surrounding area of north east Colchester. All staff are dedicated to 'Unlocking Pupil Achievement' from Nursery through to Year 6. Unity Primary Academy became an academy in September 2014 when the two predecessor schools were amalgamated. For more information, see www.unityprimaryacademy.com

Admission number and process

The school has an admission number of 60 for entry in Reception.

The school will accordingly admit this number of pupils if there are sufficient applications. Where fewer applications than this are received, the Academy Trust will offer places at the school to all those who have applied.

Applications in the 'normal round' (that is the main cycle of applications for Reception places from the beginning of the school year) are administered on behalf of the Academy Trust by Essex Local Authority as part of the local coordinated scheme.

Oversubscription criteria

When the school is oversubscribed (that is, there are more applications than places available), after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan that names the school, priority for admission will be given to those children based on the criteria set out below, in the order shown:

1. Looked after children or previously looked after children i.e. children in foster care, care homes or who were before being adopted
2. Children with siblings in the school
3. Children of school staff fulfilling a skills shortage role
4. Home-to-school distance – meaning that the remaining places are allocated in order of each child's proximity to the school.

Definitions relating to the criteria

1. 'Looked after children' are (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). 'Previously looked after children' are children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order. These definitions are set nationally, by the Department for Education.
2. 'Siblings' are defined as "a child who has a brother, sister, adopted brother or sister or stepbrother or stepsister living in the same family unit in the same family household and address who attends the preferred school or partner school in any year group excluding the final year. Biological siblings who attend the preferred school in any year group excluding the final year will also be treated as siblings irrespective of place of residence. Children residing in the same household as part of an extended family, such as cousins, will not be treated as siblings. The sibling must be at the school at the point of proposed admission". Note – this definition is the one used by the Local Authority in relation to admissions to schools that they maintain - REAch2 schools adopt the same definition to avoid any confusion and keep arrangements as simple as possible for local parents and carers.
3. This option is only available for teaching or leadership staff with a permanent contract to work at the school (and not employees in REAch2 regional or central teams); it will be subject to confirmation by an independent REAch2 regional non-executive that, on the evidence available, the post does indeed relate to a skills shortage in the area. This is compliant with the statutory School Admissions Code – in fact the code allows for a wider definition/scope for children of staff but REAch2 has chosen a more limited approach.
4. 'Home-to-school distance' is defined/measured as "Straight line distance from the address point of the home address to address point of the school. Distances are reported in miles to three decimal plac-es. For admissions purposes, the Local Authority uses data provided by Ordnance Survey (OS) to measure straight line distances. The OS data plots the co-ordinates of each individual property (the home address) which are referred to as address points".

'Home address'¹ is defined as "the address at which the child resides on a permanent basis or is 'ordinarily resident'. This is the address of the parent/carer; in some cases, children may be 'ordinarily resident' for the majority of the school week, including overnight, with another relative or carer, such as a grandparent. Where this is the case, the application may be processed on the basis of that address and proof of address and residence arrangement will be required with the application. The child must be living with the relative or carer 24 hours per day, for the majority of the school week. Arrangements where parents can leave and collect children from

¹ The school will ask applicants to provide proof of their home address. This will include a copy of the following: UK driving licence; Council tax notification; or two utility bills dated within the last 6 months (gas, electricity, water or landline phone). The school reserves the right to take additional checking measures including further documentation and in some cases unannounced home visits. If a school place is secured through false information regarding a home address, the school may withdraw the place offered.

another relative or carer on a daily basis will be regarded as childcare arrangements, and the child will not be deemed to be 'ordinarily resident' with that person. In all cases we expect that the adult with whom the child is 'ordinarily resident' receives the child benefit for the child (where eligible)".

Note – these definitions are used by the Local Authority in relation to admissions to schools that they maintain – REAch2 schools adopt the same definition to avoid any confusion and keep arrangements as simple as possible for local parents and carers.

Tie-breaker

Where the admission number given above is reached part way through one of the above over-subscription criteria, the remaining places available are allocated on proximity to the school²; but only after any applications are considered where there is third party evidence (e.g. from a medical specialist or a social worker), provided at the time of the application, setting out the exceptional medical/social need of the child (or their parent/carer) and why only this school, rather than any other, is able to meet that need; the final decision on such applications will be made by the school's governors.

Late applications

All applications received by the Local Authority after the deadline will be considered to be late applications. These will be considered after those received on time. If all available places are allocated to children whose applications were received on time, parents or carers who have made a late application may request that their child is placed on the school's waiting list. Applications received after the published closing date will be treated as late applications unless there is evidence to show that the application or amendment could not reasonably have been made on time.

Deferred entry for Reception places

Parents/carers offered a place in Reception for their child have a right to defer the date their child takes up the place, or to take the place up part-time, until the child reaches compulsory school age. Children reach compulsory school age on 31 August, 31 December or 31 March – whichever of those three dates follows (or falls on) the child's 5th birthday.

Places cannot be deferred beyond the beginning of the summer term of the school year for which the offer was made.

² As measured according to the earlier 'Definitions' section. If the distance is exactly the same for two or more children, the remaining available place will be allocated on the basis of random allocation undertaken by the Local Authority. Note that random allocation will not be applied to multiple birth siblings (twins and triplets etc.) from the same family tied for the final place. We will admit them all and exceed our admission number, as permitted by the national infant class size rules set by DfE

Admission of children outside their normal age group, including for ‘summer-born’ children

Parents or carers may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group. To do so, they should include a written request with their application, setting out the year group in which they wish their child to be allocated a place and the reasons for their request.

When such a request is made, the Headteacher will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case, based on their professional judgement of what is in the best interest of the child, taking account of the evidence and rationale provided by the parents/carers.

Waiting lists

Where the school receives more applications for Reception places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until 31 December 2018. The waiting list will be maintained by the Local Authority until end of August 2018 and then by the school until end of Autumn term 2018. It will be open to any parent or carer to ask for his or her child’s name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

Children’s position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant, they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list will be re-ordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list.

In-year admissions

Applications outside of the ‘normal round’ (that is, applications for Reception places after the normal deadline and for places in other year groups) are also coordinated on behalf of the school by Essex Local Authority. See <https://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Admissions/Pages/Applying-mid-year-for-a-school-place.aspx> for more information, noting the advice to contact the school initially to enquire about the availability of places in the relevant year groups.

Appeals

This section applies to both ‘normal round’ and ‘in-year’ admissions.

All applicants refused a place have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code.

Information about how to appeal against a refusal of a school place and the deadline for submitting an appeal will be sent with reply to your application. You can also contact the Local Authority Appeals team on 03330 139899 for advice. The appeals process is run in accordance with the statutory processes and timescales set out in the School Admissions Appeals Code.