



**Biggleswade**Academy

# Admissions Policy 2024/25

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## Section 1 – General Principles:

Biggleswade Academy is an age 2-13 'through' school and is the only school of its type within the Town of Biggleswade.

The main principle of admission to the Academy is to maintain and further develop our character of delivering excellence for all pupils within a truly comprehensive educational setting. We are therefore an inclusive school and welcome all applications.

All documentation relating to Admissions for Biggleswade Academy can be accessed and downloaded from our website here: [www.biggleswadeacademy.org](http://www.biggleswadeacademy.org)

## Section 2 – Definitions and details:

As required by the 2012 regulations, the Academy will give first priority to applications on behalf of children in public care (children who are looked after - CLA) in accordance with the definition below:

*'Looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after, became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. A looked after child is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social service functions (see section 22 of the Children Act 1989).*

Children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted in accordance to the definition below:

*A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place 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.*

Children with an EHCP naming the school must be admitted and will count towards the Planned Admission Number (PAN) if the information is available before the offer date.

Our priority admission area is as defined by the Local Authority and can currently be accessed here:

<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/school/admissions/catchment-areas/list.aspx>

Under the oversubscription criteria in section 3 the word Siblings will mean:

- *Children (including adopted or fostered children) living at the same address who have one or both natural parents in common*
- *Children (including adopted or fostered children) living at the same address who are related by a parents marriage.*
- *Children (including adopted or fostered children) living at the same address whose parents are living as partners at this address.*
- *NB / 'Cousins' are not included within our definition of sibling.*

Under the oversubscription criteria in section 3 the words 'Children of' will mean a child who has the same address as, and be living permanently with, the member of staff. Where a child stays with another parent for part of the week, further enquiries may be made in order to determine where the child permanently resides. The word staff will mean all staff employed by the school for at least two years for the purpose of working in the school as follows:

- All full time teaching staff
- All full time support staff – defined as those on a 37 week and above contract
- All part time teaching staff employed on a 0.5 or greater contract.
- All part time support staff who work more than 15 hours per week for 37 weeks or more

The definition **does not** include peripatetic staff.

## Home Address

A pupil's home address will be regarded as:

- The address of the parents or carers with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives (this will not usually include grandparents, aunts or uncles; unless these adults are named as the legal carers in a Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangement Order).
- Where a child spends time with parents at more than one address, the address used to allocate a school place will be the one at which the pupil is normally resident and where the child spends the majority of the school week (Mondays to Fridays) including nights.

If there is any query on the home address this will be checked against official documentation e.g. council tax bill, a recent utility bill (gas, electricity, water) a rental agreement, child benefit annual statement or family tax credit information.

**Admission to Biggleswade Academy is not dependent on any 'voluntary' Contribution.**

## Section 3 – Points of Intake

*Biggleswade Academy (2-13) has 3 'standard' points of intake with separate criteria for oversubscription (where there are more applicants than places available) at each point:*

### **Entry Point 1:**

Nursery/Pre-school aged children – (aged 2+ Termly intake: variable sessions)

### **Entry Point 2: 90 Full Time Places**

Statutory aged children entering 'Reception'– Children are usually admitted in September in the Academic year in which they have their fifth birthday. Normally around 90 children per year from the Academy pre-school enter statutory provision at this point, but there is no guarantee of a place for such children and applications must be made in accordance with the policy set out below.

### **Entry Point 3: 140 Full Time Places**

Entry into Y5 (September start, thereby dovetailing into traditional Bedfordshire 3-tier system)

*NB - Children already on the Academy roll prior to moving into year 5 (Entry point 3) will automatically move into Year 5 without the need to reapply for a place. Normally this is around 90 pupils.*

### **Entry point 1 (Pre-school & The Lawns Nursery)**

- Any child seeking a placement at the Academy pre-school and Lawns Nursery is eligible to start the term after they turn 2.
- The pre-school can take a maximum of 72 children per session. A session is classed as morning or afternoon.
- The Lawns can take a maximum of 108 children per session.
- The Trust Board is the admissions authority for Biggleswade Academy and will apply the following criteria (in the rank order shown) to decide the order in which places will be allocated when there are more requests from parents than the number of places available:
  - 1) *All looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted*
  - 2) *Funded children in catchment with siblings at the Academy*
  - 3) *Funded children of Academy staff*
  - 4) *Funded children in catchment*
  - 5) *Funded other non-catchment children with siblings at the Academy*
  - 6) *Funded other non-catchment children by distance*
  - 7) *Unfunded children in catchment with siblings at the Academy*
  - 8) *Unfunded children of Academy staff*
  - 9) *Unfunded children in catchment*
  - 10) *Unfunded other non-catchment children with siblings at the Academy*
  - 11) *Unfunded other non-catchment children by distance*

### **Points to note relating to entry point 1:**

- Children are currently funded the term after their 3rd birthday – cut-off days: 31<sup>st</sup>March, 31st August and 31st December
- The length of time on the waiting list is not part of the selection criteria.
- The Academy cannot guarantee parents of children who are under 3 years old a place.
- The Academy is registered by Ofsted to take 2 year olds the term after they turn 2. Priority will be given to funded 2 year olds.
- Places will be offered to children according to the above criteria. If the Academy is unable to offer a child the whole entitlement, parents are not limited to using their funding at one setting.
- The Academy Pre-school and The Lawns Nursery operate a waiting list structured in date-of-birth order, so that the following sections of the community are not excluded:
  - People who have recently moved to the area.
  - People whose first language is not English.
  - Parents of children that attend an alternative cultural setting who are not familiar with the Pre-school/The Lawns Nursery.
  - Looked After Children.
  - Childminders who may not have detailed information about specific children a long time in advance.
- Whenever possible (and if financially viable) a place will be kept vacant to accommodate an emergency admission.

### Post offer procedures:

- Once a child has been accepted at the Academy pre-school/The Lawns Nursery, the parent/carer will be notified in writing of the start date and of Home Visit details. If the Pre-school/The Lawns Nursery does not receive the parent/carer's written acceptance of the placement for children, by a date specified on the notification, the setting cannot then guarantee that the place will be held.
- Prior to attending the Academy pre-school/The Lawns Nursery each child will receive a Home Visit, they will also be sent a new starter pack. This needs to be completed, signed and dated by the parent/carer before they start.

### **Entry point 2 (Reception)**

The Trust Board is the admissions authority for Biggleswade Academy and will apply the criteria below (in the order shown) to decide the order in which places will be allocated when there are more requests from parents than the number of places available:

#### The admissions number for entry (PAN) into the Academy in Year R is – 90 children

- 1) *All looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted*
- 2) *Children in catchment with siblings at the Academy*
- 3) *Children of Academy staff*
- 4) *Children in catchment*
- 5) *Non-catchment children with siblings at the Academy*
- 6) *Other non-catchment children by distance*

#### Points to note relating to entry point 2:

- All children must be in school full time (Academy Year R) by the Statutory School age, which is the term after their 5th birthday.
- Year 1 will have one single point of admission, in the September of each Academic year.
- Children admitted into the Academy pre-school are not guaranteed a place in a Reception class.
- All children starting Reception who have not attended the Academy pre-school will receive a home visit from a member of the foundation stage staff prior to starting.
- The Academy operates a waiting list for entry point 2 based on the oversubscription criteria outlined above.
- Each child added to this list will require the list to be ranked again according to these criteria.
- The Academy waiting list will be maintained for a minimum of one full school term.

### **Entry point 3 (Year 5)**

The Trust Board is the admissions authority for Biggleswade Academy and will apply the criteria below (in the order shown) to decide the order in which places will be allocated when there are more requests from parents than the number of places available:

#### The admissions number for entry into the Academy in Year 5 (PAN) is – 140 children

*NB - Children already on the Academy roll prior to moving into Year 5 (Entry point 3) will automatically move into Year 5 without the need to reapply for a place. Normally this is around 90 pupils.*

Applications for admission into Year 5 will be prioritized in the order listed below:

- 1) *All looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted*
- 2) *Children in catchment with siblings at the Academy*
- 3) *Children of Academy staff*
- 4) *Children in catchment*
- 5) *Non-catchment children with siblings at the Academy*
- 6) *Other non-catchment children by distance*

#### Points to note relating to entry point 3:

- Children already on the Academy roll prior to moving into Year 5 will automatically move into Year 5 without the need to reapply for a place.
- The 140 pupil PAN for year 5 includes those who will automatically move into Year 5 from Year 4, normally this is around 90 pupils.
- The Academy operates a waiting list for entry point 3 based on the oversubscription criteria outlined above.
- Each child added to this list will require the list to be ranked again according to these criteria.
- The Academy waiting list will be maintained for a minimum of one full school term.

#### **Section 4 - Additional Notes:**

##### **Admissions at non 'standard' entry points including intake to 'other' Years (excluding pre-school In-year admissions)**

In the event of other children who apply to join the school outside of the normal admission rounds, admission will be on the basis of:-

- Places being available in a class with the relevant year group without this prejudicing the education of pupils already on role.
- That projected figures for future intakes indicates the admissions figures will not be exceeded.

##### **A place cannot be guaranteed to a pupil who moves to within the school's catchment area outside of the normal admissions round (or after the allocation process has been completed).**

##### **'Tie breaks'**

If applying these criteria results in there being more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the tie break will be the distance the pupil lives from the school, measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system (or equivalent), those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. The distance will be measured from the address point of the pupil's home to the front door of the Mead End site of the Academy. The Trust Board will not give priority within each criterion to children who meet other criteria.

In the event when PAN criteria would be exceeded because of 'Multiple Births' (e.g. there is only one further place available for a child who is one of twins or triplets etc...) it would be usual for places to be granted to all children of such multiple births.

##### **Exceptions:**

Pupils who have a Statement of Special Education Needs or EHCP are required to be admitted to the school which is named on the statement, even if the school is full.

Pupils identified for admission through the Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full.

##### **Requests for admission outside the normal age group:**

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely
- The Principal's / Academy's views

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria. Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

##### **Waiting List**

In the event of more applications to the Academy than places available, the application will be placed on a waiting list. These and late applications will go onto this list in a position determined by the criteria (see above). If a place becomes available in the Academy it will be offered to the child that best meets the published admission rules.

##### **Appeals**

Parents who have not been allocated a place for their child in either the Reception year or Year five have the right of appeal to an independent admissions panel.

NB / Parents cannot appeal if a place is not allocated to their child for the pre-school or nursery year.