Admissions Policy and Arrangements

Academic year 2027-2028

Create Learning Trust

Approved by	Date	Review Schedule	Date of Review
Board of Trustees	September 2025	Annually	September 2026

Introduction and Rationale

This document sets out the admission arrangements for the schools in Create Learning multi-academy trust (hereafter referred to as 'the Trust'): Sandiway Primary School, Cuddington Primary School, Hartford Primary School and Little Leigh Primary School (hereafter referred to as 'the School'). All schools in Create Learning Trust will participate in the coordinated admission arrangements administered by the Local Authority, Cheshire West and Chester (hereafter referred to as 'the LA') in the relevant geographical location and in respect of other arrangements specified in the Admissions Code.

The School will comply with all relevant provisions of the Department for Education's School Admissions Code of Practice 2021 ('the Admissions Code'), the School Admission Appeals Code of Practice 2022 ('the Appeals Code) and the law on admissions. Reference in the Codes to admission authorities shall be deemed to be references to the Board of Create Learning Trust, the powers and functions of which may be delegated to the Local Governance Committee (LGC) of the School.

Notwithstanding these arrangements, the Secretary of State may direct a School to admit a named pupil to the School on application from a LA. Before doing so, the Secretary of State will consult the School/Trust.

Through compliance with the School Admissions Code and Appeals Code, we ensure that our admissions policy is fair and transparent.

Normal Admissions Round

Application for Admissions in September 2027

This is the maximum number (PAN planned admission number) that will be admitted to Reception each September.

- Sandiway, Cuddington and Little Leigh – 30 pupils
- Hartford Primary School – 60 pupils

The Trust complies with School Admissions legislation requiring all Local Authorities to co-ordinate admission arrangements in their area. Co-ordinated admission schemes provide a way to ensure that every parent living in a Local Authority receives an offer of one, and only one, school place on the same day, with letters being posted out on or about 16 April. All places are automatically accepted, parents/carers only need to contact Cheshire West and Chester if they are declining their child's school place. Parents/ carers are asked to notify Cheshire West and Chester as soon as possible if they are declining a school place, this is to allow for the admissions team to re allocate this place to a child on the waiting list.

Children reach compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday. Under this policy, children may start school in the Reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. Applications for admission are normally considered in relation to the availability of places in the child's chronological age group, other than in exceptional circumstances.

Parents can request that the date their child starts school in the Reception class is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year. Applications for deferred admissions must be made by the published closing date. For parents and carers with children born between 1 April and 31 August they should contact the LA to obtain information on the 'Summer Born Policy' and for advice if they wish to consider delaying their child's entry for a full year. Parents and carers considering this option must apply in the child's chronological year group to ensure that they are part of the process should they decide not to delay their child's entry. The vast majority of children in Cheshire West and Chester and the Trust are taught in their chronological year group.

To help younger children adjust to school, the School may propose to phase full time admission over the first four weeks of term, admitting these children on a part time basis. However, it should be noted that parents have the right to insist that their child receives full time from the start of September and that they also can request that their child attends school on a part time basis until the child reaches compulsory school age.

As an academy school, Create Learning Trust is the admission authority, applying its own admission criteria as detailed below. However, all parents will only have to fill in their local authority common application form and will receive their offer from the LA in whose area they live.

Applications from Cheshire West and Chester residents for places in local authority-maintained schools and academies, including applications for schools maintained by other local authorities, must be made on the Cheshire West and Chester Council common application form. The application process will begin on 1 September 2026.

As required by law, Cheshire West and Chester Council makes arrangements for parents and carers resident within the authority's administrative area to express up to three preferences for any English authority school/s, ranked in order of priority, using the LA's common application form or online application facility and to give reasons in support of each preference, including any supporting documentation, before any places are offered.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where more applications are received than there are places available and after the admission of pupils with statements of special educational needs or an education health and care plan, where the school is named in the statement, preferences for community and voluntary controlled schools, together with any supporting information, will be considered in accordance with the trust's published oversubscription criteria as follows:

1) A looked after child or a child who was previously looked after by an English Local Authority but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship, order. A looked after child is a child who is in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions, as defined in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989.

2) A looked after child or a child who was previously looked after outside England but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order. A looked after child is a child who is in the care of a local authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions, as defined in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989.

3) Siblings. Pupils with brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or stepsisters, half-brothers or half-sisters, adopted brothers or adopted sisters living together as part of one household, already attending the preferred school in years Reception through to Year 5 in the primary school and expected to continue at the school in the following school year, at the time of admission. Siblings in Year 6 six will not be considered under this criterion for the normal admission rounds.

4) Children resident within the designated catchment zone of the school. Children will be classed within this category if they and their parents or carers are resident within the area served by the school at the time of application. However, for the normal admission rounds, the authority may consider a change of address providing the child is resident in the new property and supporting documentation is received by 20 February 2026 for reception applications, when the authority will begin the allocation of places process.

5) Pupils living nearest to the school measured in a straight line from the centrally plotted Basic Land and Property Unit point of the child's home address to the centrally plotted basic land and property unit point of the school as defined by local land and property gazetteer.

Where a school cannot accommodate all pupils qualifying under one of the criteria stated above, the next

criteria will also be applied to determine priority for admission. For example, if a school cannot accommodate all siblings for whom an application has been received, all sibling applicants will be prioritised in the order of:

- Siblings who live within the school's designated catchment area
- Siblings who do not live within the school's designated catchment area

All applicants within each criterion will be put into distance order with priority being given to those that live nearest to the school, as stated above.

Where it is identified that there are a limited number of places available and the local authority cannot differentiate between the applications using the nearest school criterion, a random allocation tiebreaker will be applied. This may be required for example, where applicants reside in the same block of flats or separate addresses measuring the same distance from the school:

- If in categories 2-4 above a tie-break is necessary to determine which child is admitted, the child living closest to the school will be given priority for admission. Distance is measured as explained above.

- Random allocation, undertaken by an independent body, will be used as a tie-break in categories 2-4 above to decide who has highest priority for admission if the distance between a child's home and the academy is equidistant in any two or more cases.

Note: In the case of multiple births, where there is only one place available in the School, we will consider all siblings as one application, even if this means exceeding our PAN.

Equal preferences

All preferences will be considered on the basis of the equal preference model for allocating places, in accordance with legal requirements. This means that in the first instance, all preferences will be considered against the school's published oversubscription criteria only, without reference to the preference ranking. Where a pupil can potentially be allocated more than one school place stated on the application form, the single offer, determined by the home authority, will be for the school ranked highest on the application form by the parents or carers.

If the pupil is a Cheshire West and Chester resident and Cheshire West and Chester Council, as the home authority, is not able to offer any of the preferences stated on the form a place will be allocated at the nearest Cheshire West and Chester school (including faith schools) with known vacancies using the authority's mapping system for measuring straight line distances from the Basic Land and Property Unit point of the home address to the Basic Land and Property Unit point of the school in miles.

Where an application has been received from a parent resident in another authority and a place cannot be offered, Cheshire West and Chester Council will not allocate an alternative school place.

Children of multiple births

In relation to children of multiple births, exceptionally it may be necessary to offer places over the published admission number. This is to ensure that, as far as possible, siblings (twins, triplets or children from other multiple births) can attend the same school. In normal circumstances the local authority will not be able to agree admission over the published admission number where to do so would result in a breach of infant class size legislation, which requires that infant classes, where the majority of children will reach the age of five, six or seven contain no more than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher. However, the School Admissions Code, December 2014 allows the admittance of a sibling in the same school year (twins, triplets or children from other multiple births) as a permitted exception where one sibling can be offered and not the other. This is a discretionary permitted exception and may not be agreed if the admittance of more children into a particular year

group would cause prejudice to the efficient education and efficient use of resources to other children in that year group.

Children of UK service personnel

Places will be allocated in advance of the family arriving in the area for children of UK service personnel and veterans, if accompanied by an official government letter which declares a relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering area address for considering the application against local authority oversubscription criteria. In addition, it may be necessary to offer places above the published admission number as the School Admissions Code, December 2014 allows the admittance of a force's child as a permitted exception in relation to infant class size legislation. This is a discretionary permitted exception and may not be agreed if the admittance of more children into a particular year group would cause prejudice to the efficient education and efficient use of resources to other children in that year group. Consideration for applications for children of UK service personnel and veterans is given in accordance with the Cheshire West Armed Forces Covenant.

Parents and Carers with shared responsibility for a child

Where parents or carers have shared responsibility for a child the place of residency will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the week, for example, where the child wakes up between Monday to Friday. Full details must be submitted in writing to enable the local authority to determine which address will be used for the purpose of admission. A panel of officers will consider the information provided. If the panel agrees that sufficient evidence has been provided, then this address will be used for the purpose of assigning a criterion to the application.

Where the local authority is unable to reach a decision based on the information received, for example, where a child lives equally with both parents, the address provided for claiming child benefit and where appropriate, child tax credits or equivalent will be applied to the admission application. In such circumstances, documentary evidence must be provided. Any delay in receiving any required information will result in the local authority determining residence for the purpose of admission based on the information available to it.

In the event of two applications being received for a child residing equally with both parents/carers, neither application will be considered, and the parents/carers will be asked to agree a single application between themselves.

Moving house

Parents and carers must inform the authority immediately of a change of address, even if details of a future change of residency were included on the application form as this may change a child's oversubscription criteria for a particular school. The authority will require supporting evidence to show that the place of residency has changed, for example completion of sale, tenancy agreements, council tax and utility bills and any other information considered relevant to the application, including disposal of previous property. In addition, proof that the child now resides at the new property will be required i.e. child benefit or child tax credit. For the normal admission round supporting evidence must be received by the date as stated in part two.

In respect of applications made as part of the normal admission round, for example, into the reception class in a primary school and into year seven as a secondary transfer in September for the first time, information and supporting evidence must be received by the dates in part two of these arrangements. Proof of residency received after the published date will not be used to process the application but will be used to send the decision letter on the published offer date.

Waiting lists

Waiting lists will be held in oversubscription criteria order and not on a first come, first served basis. A vacant place will be reallocated to the child with the highest oversubscription criteria on the school's waiting list on the day the place becomes available. Placing a child's name on a waiting list does not affect the statutory right

of appeal. Waiting lists must be held until the end of the autumn term.

Normal admission round

The normal admission round refers to applications made before the offer release date for admission into the relevant age group i.e. into a reception class in the primary school in September. Waiting lists for oversubscribed schools will be prepared in line with the dates specified in part two. Any child refused a school place will automatically be placed on the school's waiting list. They will also consist of children for whom an appeal has been received by the dates specified in part two together with any late applicants.

Changing preferences

In respect of applications made for the normal point of entry, i.e. into Reception class in a primary school for the first time, the local authority will not accept a change of preference made after the published closing date without a genuine reason, such as a recent house move. Full details must be provided to the local authority for consideration, along with supporting documentation.

If the authority's decision is that the reason, based on the evidence provided is not valid, then the application will be treated as a late application and as such notification of the outcome of that application will be after the accept/decline date as stated in part two. It is important therefore that parents and carers give full consideration to the preferences they make on their on-time application form.

Other relevant changes of circumstances, e.g. admission of a sibling

Further information received after the supporting documentation deadlines, as stated in part two, will not be considered as part of the on-time allocation process. The information will be assessed after the accept/decline date and any changes that would assign a different criterion to an application, for example, sibling, in catchment, will be applied to the application and used to determine where the child falls on a waiting list.

Late applications – Normal admission round only

Late applications for places at Cheshire West and Chester schools, i.e. applications not submitted to the authority by the relevant statutory closing date will be considered after all on time applications unless the local authority considers that there are good reasons for the application being late, which must be stated at the time of application, for example, exceptional medical reasons preventing an earlier application, late removal into the area. Supporting documentation must be provided.

Where supporting documentation has been received by the date specified in part two of these arrangements and the authority has accepted reasons stated for the late application, the application will be considered as if it had been received on time

Late applications and supporting documentation received after the dates specified will be considered after all on time applications even where the authority accepts that there are good reasons for the late application and as such these applications may be disadvantaged in the consideration of their preferences.

Late applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application after the published offer date specified in part two of these arrangements.

In-year applications

In-year applications are those received after the 1 September into the relevant age group or at any time into any other year group.

Applications for admission are normally considered in relation to the availability of places in the child's chronological age group, other than in exceptional circumstances. In exceptional circumstances requests can be made for entry into a year group outside the chronological age range of a child. Parents and carers considering such a request must in the first instance speak to the Headteacher of the school they will be

applying for. The decision as whether it would be in the child's best interest to be educated outside the chronological year is determined by the head teacher at the schools concerned in agreement with the parent/carer.

Parents and carers, irrespective of where they reside, who are seeking in year school places for schools and academies in Cheshire West and Chester authority are required to apply direct to the school or academy. Parents and carers must either complete an application form obtained from the school or complete an online form available on the local authority's website, which is directed to the school or academy for processing.

Waiting lists will be in oversubscription criteria order and not on a first come, first served basis. Any child refused a school place will automatically be placed on the school's waiting list and will be considered together with children for whom an appeal has been received and any new applicants. Schools will be responsible for administering and updating their waiting lists and must be clear to parents and carers as to how the waiting lists will be operated on an annual basis.

A school place is not considered available until the school is able to remove a child from the roll according to the local authority's safeguarding protocol.

Parents and carers must notify the school if there are any changes in circumstances that would impact their oversubscription criteria for the waiting list.

The holding of in year waiting lists for aided, foundation, studio, free schools and academies will be determined by the school or academy.

Right of appeal In Year Appeals

Parents and carers have the right to appeal against a decision to refuse entry. Appeal applications must be lodged with the relevant Academy within 20 school days from the date of notification that the application for admission was unsuccessful. Appeals are normally heard within 30 school days from the date the completed appeal form is received by the Academy.

All appeals

Create Learning Trust will arrange for an independent panel to hear all appeals. The appeal panel's decision is binding for all parties concerned.

Notification of the appeal hearing will be sent to appellants 10 school days in advance of the hearing. If an appellant wishes to provide additional evidence which was not included in their original application or appeal form this must be received 5 working days before the hearing date. Otherwise, the Panel is entitled to decide not to accept information or evidence submitted after that deadline.

(Further details of appeal arrangements are set out in the revised Code of Practice on School Admissions Appeals) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-appeals-code

Repeat applications and appeals

Repeat applications and appeals will not be considered within the same school year, unless the parent, carer or school's circumstances have changed significantly since the original application was made. Full details of the change of circumstances must be provided for consideration by the local authority.

Vacancies occurring in a year group which was fully subscribed at the time of the initial application will be deemed to constitute a significant change in the school's circumstances and a repeat application will be permitted.

Offer of Places

Letters or e-mails informing parents or carers of the outcome of their applications will be sent out by Cheshire West & Chester Council on 16 April each year (or the next working day).

If a parent is found to have supplied false or incorrect information to gain a place at the new school, the School/LGC/Trust will reconsider the application against the correct information when it becomes known. This may lead to the child being given lower priority for admission and could lead to the withdrawal of an offer of a place.

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