Christchurch Infant School

A member of Twynham Learning

For Consultation

Admissions Policy

2028-2029

Determination by the Twynham Learning Trust Board as the Admission Authority for Twynham Learning schools	[Date – February 2027]

1. Introduction

This document sets out the 2028-2029 Admission arrangements for Christchurch Infant School, a member of the Twynham Learning Multi-Academy Trust (the Trust). For the purpose of this policy, the Board of Trustees is the Admission Authority but has delegated the administration of the admissions process to the school, overseen by the School Ambassador Committee (local school governors). BCP Council run a coordinated admissions scheme in the geographical area in their role as Local Authority and all Twynham Learning schools participate in this.

Parents who wish their children to be admitted to the school must follow BCP Council's admissions process. BCP Council encourage electronic applications via their Parent Portal. Full details regarding the process are available on their website. They can supply a paper version of the Local Authority Common Application Form (CAF) on request.

Every year, in line with the national timetable, the Twynham Learning Board of Trustees will review and publish information concerning the Christchurch Infant School Admissions Policy. The policy takes account of the Equality Act 2010, and the Trust's public sector equality duty.

In accordance with the School Admissions Code, the Trust, as the Admission Authority, will undertake consultation with the Local Authority, parents, local community groups and other local schools in respect of the admissions policy, where required.

2. Admission General Principles

This policy is centred on the principles of:

- Serving a traditional area/community identified as a catchment area (details of which are on the school website)
- The social and educational advantages of children attending their local schools
- Admission arrangements being consistently and equally applied to all requests being made by parents for admission, irrespective of background
- Complying with the Local Authority co-ordinated schemes for in-year and normal year-of-entry admissions

The offer of a school place may be withdrawn where a parent fails to respond to an offer within a reasonable timescale or the place was offered on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application, or it has been offered in error.

3. Dates for Applications

The Admission Authority will consider first all those applications received by the published deadline of midnight on 15 January 2028. Notifications to parents offering a place will be sent by the Local Authority on, or the first working day after, 16 April 2028. Applications made after midnight on 15 January 2028 will be considered after all on-time applications have been fully processed.

4. Published Admission Number (PAN)

The PAN for 2028-2029 is 90 for the year of entry (Year Reception). The allocation of school places up to the published admission number is in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below (Section 5 Oversubscription Criteria).

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A school will be asked to exceed its PAN only where the Admissions Code allows. Examples include:

- An event/incident occurs in another educational establishment which could not have possibly been planned for e.g. fire
- To comply with other agreed protocols, e.g. Children in Care, Fair Access, the School being named in Section I of an Education, Health and Care Plan
- A child moves into an area outside the normal admissions round and no other school would provide suitable education within a reasonable distance of their home (45 minutes travel time)
- An allocations error has occurred and a place should have been offered
- Multiple birth siblings would be split and therefore will be offered together

5. Oversubscription Criteria

Where a child has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that names the school, the Trust recognises a duty to admit the child to the school. This is covered by Sections 324 to 328 and Schedule 27 to, the Education Act 1996. Guidance is provided in the SEND Code of Practice (2015).

Where all parental preferences for places at the school can be satisfied, all children seeking a place will be admitted. Where there are too few places available, as measured against the PAN, places will be allocated according to the following priority order:

1. All looked after, previously looked after children and children who have been adopted from state care (child in care) including those outside of England (see footnote 1)
2. Children who the authority accepts have an exceptional medical or social need and where there is a need for a place at one specific school (see footnotes 2).
3. Children living within the school's catchment area who will have a sibling(s) attending the school at the time of admission. (see footnote 3).
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6. Children of staff with at least two years' continuous service at the school or who have been recruited to a vacancy to meet a demonstrable skills shortage as at the date of application (in year) or relevant closing date under the LA co-ordinated scheme (normal year of entry) and who still intend to be employed at the school at the time of the child's admission.
7. All other children living outside the school's catchment area.

If oversubscribed within any of the priority order categories above, places will be allocated on the basis of the shortest straight-line measurement using the Local Authority's geographical information system which identifies the Easting and Northing for the home address and the centre point of the school site and calculates the distance between the two locations.

In the event that it is not possible to distinguish between applications despite applying the priority categories above, the remaining place(s) will be allocated using a random allocation process. The process will be electronically administered by BCP through the IT providers in use at the time. At the time of setting this policy the provider was Synergy.

Where applications are received from families with multiple birth siblings and, by adhering to PAN these siblings could not be offered the same school, the admission number will be exceeded to accommodate the multiple birth siblings. This recognises the exceptional nature of emotional bonds between multiple birth siblings. This is not an indication that schools can exceed the admission number other than under these exceptional circumstances.

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Footnotes

1. A "Child in Care" means any child who is in the care of a local authority in accordance with Section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989. A child who was "previously a Child in Care" means a child who after being Looked After became subject to an Adoption Order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002, a Child Arrangement Order under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989 or Special Guardianship Order under Section 14A of the Children Act 1989.
2. Applications will only be considered under this category if there is evidence provided such as a Child Protection Order, Children in Need document or a written statement from a doctor, social worker or other relevant independent professional. The information must confirm the exceptional medical or social need and demonstrate how the specified school is the only school that can meet the defined needs of the child. The local authority is all inclusive and will meet all legislative requirements to accommodate children within their educational setting as appropriate to their need.
3. The term 'sibling' means full brother or sister, half or step brother or sister, adoptive brother or sister and other non-blood related children who live with married or cohabiting parents in the same household and relates to all year groups provided by the school. In the case of an infant school the sibling link will apply to the related junior school and vice versa.

6. Entry to Reception Year Group

Twynham Learning encourages all children to enter Year R in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents offered a place in reception for their child have a right to defer the date their child is admitted, or to take the place up part-time, until the child reaches compulsory school age. Places cannot be deferred beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made. Children reach compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their 5th birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 August, 31 December and 31 March.

In the case of children born between 1st April and 31st August (summer born), parents may choose for their child to start school when they are four or in the September immediately following their fifth birthday, when they become of statutory school age. It is for the Admission Authority to decide whether it is in the best interests of the child to start in Year 1 with their chronological cohort, or delay entry to Year R.

The process and criteria for considering requests to delay admission to school for summer born children is outlined in section 10 (Admission /Transfer of Children Outside Normal Year groups) below. This applies to all pupils with the exception of those holding or undergoing assessment for an Education Health & Care Plan whose parent(s)/carer(s) should contact BCP Council's Special Educational Needs Team for advice. All other application forms should be submitted direct to the BCP Council School Admissions Team.

7. Waiting Lists

The school will operate a waiting list for each year group for those who were refused a place. This waiting list will be ranked in accordance with the oversubscription criteria and will be reordered according to the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to the list.

Looked after children or previously looked after children allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol must take precedence over those on a waiting list.

The school will maintain a clear, fair and objective waiting list until 31st August of each school year of admission. Beyond this, all names are removed from the waiting list by the school (on behalf of the Admission Authority). If parents wish to keep a child on a waiting list beyond this, they will need to reapply for a school place via the Local Authority from 1 June each year.

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8. In-year Applications

The BCP admissions team co-ordinates the in-year applications and in every case an admissions form must be completed with all relevant information attached to the application. All policies and the Parents' Guide, which provides further information and clarification, are available here. The school maintains a waiting list of children wanting a school place. When a place is available, those on the waiting list, pending appeals and current applications are considered together in line with the oversubscription criteria published above.

9. Appeals

Parents have the right of appeal to an independent Appeals Panel. Details of the appeals procedure for the relevant year of admission can be found on the school's website. The decision of the panel is binding on all parties.

10. Admission/Transfer of Children Outside Normal Year Groups

It is Twynham Learning's policy that children attending Trust schools normally be placed with their own age group, and be educated for the majority of the time with their age peer group. Parents do however from time to time seek places for children in a lower or higher age group. Such requests may be made for a variety of reasons, for example where a child has moved to the area from abroad, or has missed schooling due to illness, or has a marked talent or ability. In these cases, differentiation of the curriculum and/or additional support within their age group should usually address the particular issue.

However, if a parent expresses an interest in applying for admission outside of the normal age group, they should request a meeting with the School to discuss their options in the first instance. After discussion with the School, if the parent wishes to pursue an application for admission outside the normal age group, they will be asked to submit the standard application form but to forward a request to consider their child being educated outside their normal year group, along with any supporting evidence, to the school via office@cisdorset.org. Reasons for the request being made should be clearly set out.

Supporting evidence may include, but is not limited to:

- Early Years reports and assessments where this is available (for summer born delayed entry to reception requests)
- Information from the child's current nursery or pre-school if applicable (for summer born delayed entry to reception requests)
- Assessments provided by the Pre-School Provider or Health Visitor from issues raised at the 2 year old check (for summer born delayed entry to reception requests)
- Existing professional reports and assessments e.g. educational psychology reports from the Local Authority where these are available
- Health information
- Other relevant information and documentary evidence.

Twynham Learning is the school's own Admission Authority and the final decision on whether to allow delayed entry lies with the Board of Trustees, as the Admissions Authority.
The admission authority will notify parents of its decision in writing.

If there are any future changes to the School Admissions Code relating to the delayed entry to school (for summer born children), this policy will be amended or removed to reflect any changes to the code.

If the application is approved, any existing applications will be cancelled and the parents will need to reapply the following year (for delayed entry) or make an in-year application (for accelerated entry) within the

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published timeframes. At no point will offers be held in two year groups. Any applications made following this approval will not be given special priority over other applications in that year as the usual oversubscription criteria will apply. If the application is not approved, parents should note that although they have a statutory right to appeal the general admission decision, this right does not extend to the decision on whether to admit a child outside their normal age group.

11. Definitions

A **looked after child** is a child who is (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by the local authority in the exercise of their social services functions as defined in section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989.

This criterion provides a priority for children who 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 the definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). It must also be used for children who were previously looked after (including State care outside of England) but immediately after being looked after were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order. This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Adoption orders) and children who were adopted under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. Child arrangements orders are defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

Applicants can be asked to provide additional evidence in order to verify the previously looked after status of a child. It is at the discretion of the Admission Authority what evidence is required. The final decision will be made by the Admission Authority. If any information supplied by an applicant is judged by the Admission Authority to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading, the Admission Authority may refuse to offer a place, or if already offered, may withdraw the offer of a place in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

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. Applicants can be asked to provide additional evidence in order to verify the previously looked after status of a child. It is at the discretion of the Admission Authority what evidence is required. The final decision will be made by the Admission Authority. If any information supplied by an applicant is judged by the Admission Authority to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading, the Admission Authority may refuse to offer a place, or if already offered, may withdraw the offer of a place in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

Staff: This is applicable to all staff employed by Twynham Learning to work at Christchurch Infant School as follows:

1. the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, or
2. the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage and is subject to the DfE Admissions Code 2021.

For all staff employed within federated structures, staff whose posts are shared across more than one school, and staff who work across multiple schools within the Trust, this oversubscription criterion applies only where Twynham School is their principal or main place of employment. Staff who work at Twynham School but whose main place of employment is another school will not qualify under this criterion.

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For the purposes of this criterion, 'children of staff' means children whose parent, legal guardian or resident step-parent is the member of staff.

Sibling: The term "sibling" means full brother or sister, stepbrother or sister, adoptive brother or sister, foster brother or sister and non-blood related children who live with married or cohabiting parents in the same household and relates to all year groups provided by the school.

Home address: The home address where a child lives is considered to be a residential property that is the child's main or only address during term time.

Only one application can be considered for each child. Where parents/carers are separated it is essential that agreement is reached by both parties concerning the nominated preferred schools. Where a child spends part of their week with one parent and part with the other, only one address can be used. This must be the address at which the child spends most of their time during term time.

Applicants can be asked to provide additional evidence in order to verify addresses and/or other details provided. It is at the discretion of the Admission Authority what evidence is required (evidence may include, but is not limited to, Child Benefit, GP registration, evidence of home ownership/tenancy etc.). The final decision on the home address of a child will be made by the Admission Authority. If any information supplied by an applicant is judged by the Admission Authority to be fraudulent or intentionally misleading, the Admission Authority may refuse to offer a place, or if already offered, may withdraw the offer of a place in accordance with the School Admissions Code.

Change of Address

In Year:

In Year places can only be offered on the basis of future moves on the receipt of the documentation specified below:

- a letter from the solicitor (or equivalent) confirming exchange of contracts to buy a property relevant to the application
- a tenancy agreement confirming the renting of a specific property relevant to the application
- a letter from a housing association confirming that the parent(s) will be living at a specific address relevant to the application

To be considered all evidence must be submitted at the time of application.

Point of Entry:

When applying for point of entry, BCP will not accept a change of address once the National Closing Date has passed. The National Closing Date for point of entry year groups (Year Reception) is 15 January 2028. This means if your moving date is after 15 January 2028, we will use your old address to categorise your application. You will need to tell us your new address so we can update your child's record. If you move house after you have submitted your application but before the National Closing Date, you must inform us before 15 January 2028 to ensure your application is considered from your new address. The relevant date for the house move is (if purchasing) exchange of contracts occurring on or before the closing date; (if renting) signed tenancy agreement which commences on or before the closing date.

UK Service Personnel and Crown Servants:

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, The School will consider an application in advance of the family arriving in the area, provided the application is

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accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. The School will use the address at which the child will live when applying the admissions criteria, as long as parents provide some evidence of their intended address (including using a Unit or quartering address as the child's home address where a parent requests this), and will offer a place if, after applying the admissions criteria, the child is eligible for a place.

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