Bridge Academy Trust

RICHARD DE CLARE COMMUNITY ACADEMY

ADMISSIONS POLICY 2026-27

Last consultation date ***(consultation to be held every 7 years unless changes in-between)***	18/12/2020	29/01/2020
Period of Consultation (if required)	From N/A	To N/A
Trustees Committee Reviewing Document:	Full Board of Trustees	
Date of Board of Trustees Meeting at which Policy Approved (if required)	17th December 2024	
Reviewer	Director of Primary Education Headteacher Governance Professional	
Advice From	DfE Admissions Code	

Summary of changes

Following a review of the policy from the Admissions Adjudicator a full review of all areas of the policy were undertaken with the exception of the section marked Admission to Richard de Clare Community Academy.

September 2024 – no changes.

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ADMISSION TO RICHARD DE CLARE COMMUNITY ACADEMY

This policy should be read in line with Essex County Councils Admissions process.

Bridge Academy Trust applies the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend Richard de Clare Community Academy. Admissions are dealt with in accordance with agreed guidance as produced by Essex County Council. We seek to be an inclusive school, welcoming children from all backgrounds and abilities.

We adopt the procedure set out below to determine whether a child is to be accepted or not. It is our wish for parents to find a place for their child at the school of their preference. However, this is not always possible, due to excess demand on the places available.

Published Admission Number – **60 per year Group**

There is no guarantee of a place. In the event of oversubscription places will be allocated using the following criteria in the order given;

1. Looked after children and previously looked after children*;
2. Children with a sibling** attending the school;
3. Pupils living in the priority admission area (as defined by the local authority);
4. Straight line distance.

* Looked After Children:
Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order). All references to previously looked after children in this policy mean such children who were adopted (or subject to child arrangements orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after and 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.

**Siblings:
For applications made in the normal admission round a relevant sibling is 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 in any year group excluding final year.

Biological and adopted 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.

For mid-year applications a sibling is 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 as a child who attends or has been offered a place at the preferred school or partner school at the time of application and determination and with a reasonable expectation that the sibling will be attending at the time of admission.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION

In the event of oversubscription within any of the above criteria, priority will be determined by straight line distance from the home address to school, those living closest being given the highest priority.

STRAIGHT LINE DISTANCE

Straight line distance is measured from the address point of the home address to address point of the school. Distances are reported in miles to three decimal places. If a child's time is split equally

between two residences, the address of the residence at which the child resides for the majority of the school week would be used to measure the distance between the child's school and home.

In the unlikely event of two applicants with an identical distance competing for a single place at a school the place will be offered in the following way: Every applicant is given a unique random number for each of their school preferences. When a random tiebreak is needed, this random number will be used to allocate the place – the lowest number is given priority. If two applications were received from the same block of flats, the applicant with the lower door number would be classed as nearest and offered a place.

HOME ADDRESS

Applications will normally be processed on the basis of the home address for the child at the time of application and determination.

The home address is considered to be the address at which the child resides on a permanent basis or is 'ordinarily resident', including overnight. This is generally 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. This may also be the case where a child resides between two parents at different addresses following the breakdown of the parental relationship. Where this is the case, the application will be processed on the basis of that address (where the child resides for the majority of the school week) and proof of address and formal residence arrangement will be required with the application. The child must be living with the parent, relative or carer 24 hours per day, for the majority of the school week. Where there is an eligibility for child benefit, evidence that the adult with whom the child is 'ordinarily resident' receives the child benefit may be requested. If the adult(s) with whom the child is 'ordinarily resident' is not in receipt of the child benefit, further enquiries may be made and evidence requested to confirm that the child is 'ordinarily resident' at the stated address, for example, GP/health registration address evidence.

Arrangements where parents can leave and collect children from 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.

CHILDREN WITH AN EDUCATION HEALTH AND CARE PLAN

Children with an **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)** that name the school on the plan are required to be admitted to a school regardless of their place in the priority order.

MID-YEAR APPLICATIONS

Applications must be made directly to the school. Please ensure the mid-year application form is completed and sent directly to the school. This can be found here: Admissions | Richard de Clare Community Academy.

LATE APPLICATIONS

Main round 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. No application/preference received after the closing date will be treated as on time. A new on time preference will not be accepted after the closing date unless the circumstances are deemed to be exceptional. No change to the rank order of existing preferences will be accepted after the closing date except for changes of address and no such changes will be permitted after the closing date until after the first round of offers has been made. Late applications will be given a lower priority and will be dealt with after all on time applications in the first round of offers. Where the school is oversubscribed, late applications will be refused and ranked according to the admission criteria on the waiting list. All late applications will be considered by the Local Authority to ascertain whether exceptional circumstances for late submission exist. Where that is deemed to be the case the application will be treated as 'on time'. Where a school is oversubscribed, late applications received after the first round of offers will be refused and ranked according to the admission criteria on the waiting list held for the school.

Any new applications or change requests received after the closing date will be held and not considered until after the first round of offers.

WAITING LISTS

For admissions to reception, the Local Authority will not maintain waiting lists beyond the first week of the autumn term, however parents will have the opportunity to register their continued interest in a place directly with the school after this point.

The school will maintain a waiting list for all year groups. Applicants will be ranked on these waiting lists in priority order, according to the school's admission criteria. Each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria.

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

As required by law, we provide for the full-time admission of all children offered a place in the Reception year group from the September following their fourth birthday. Therefore, if a parent wants a full-time place for their child from September (at the school at which a place has been offered) then they are entitled to that full-time place. Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in the school year.

The law does not require a child to start school until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. Compulsory school age is reached at that point. Where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. Any parents interested in taking up a part-time place and/or delayed start should contact the school for further details as to what this would entail. Where parents choose to delay entry within the academic year, the school may reasonably expect that the child would start at the beginning of a new school term / half term.

ADMISSION OUTSIDE OF THE 'NORMAL AGE GROUP'

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. The parents of a summer born child have the right to postpone the admission of their child to school until after 31 August, which would mean the September in the year following when the child could have joined a school.

Where a parent of a 'summer-born' child (1 April – 31 August) is considering their child to start in reception in the autumn term following their fifth birthday, it is recommended you apply for a place at the usual time for the admission, as the DfE guidance for parents says, *"If you do not want your child to miss their reception year, you should submit a request for admission out of the normal age group to the school's admission authority at the same time."* Parents should seek the view of the headteacher and so we recommend the parents present their own views, plus any supporting information they already have as to why it would be in the best interests of the child to defer entry. This could include 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; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

Once the view of the headteacher have been received, parents should then make their 'out-of-age' admission request, including the statement of views of the headteacher, direct to Bridge Academy Trust (as our admission authority) to admissions@bridgeacademytrust.org.

If our admission authority agree that based in the evidence provided, a deferral is in the best interests of this particular child, then parents can withdraw the application for the current year and apply for reception the following year. The decision letter from our admissions authority will need to be presented to the Local Authority with your application. This application would be considered with all other applications for YR and in line with the oversubscription criteria.

If your request for out-of-age admission is not agreed, you have three options:

a) Accept the offer of a place in a reception class in the school year following your child's fourth birthday. This is the only guaranteed option for your child to enter reception.

b) Refuse the offer of a place in reception class in the school year following your child's fourth birthday, and in the next admissions window make a new application for out-of-age admission to reception. You should submit up-to-date views and/or supporting information. The admissions authority will make a decision based on the best interest of the child taking account of the new circumstances.

c) Refuse the offer of a place in reception class and make an in-year application for your child to be admitted to year 1 in the September following their fifth birthday. The application will not be dealt with as a Reception application.

Admission authorities will still consider requests that are made outside the timescales set out in the process.

If the application for a deferred Reception place is not accepted this does not constitute a refusal of the place and there is no right to an independent statutory appeal. Further details are provided in the Primary Education Booklet.

APPEALS AGAINST DECISIONS

Parents have a right of appeal to an independent appeals panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code. Should you wish to appeal the decision please contact Essex County Council: www.essex.gov.uk/after-your-school-offer/appeals.

APPEALS TIMETABLE

National Offer Day	Parents informed of outcome of application
20 School days after National Offer Day	Deadline by when appeals should have been lodged
Summer Term:	Appeals heard for those lodged by deadline and where possible for late appeals
September onwards:	Appeals heard for any appeals not heard before end of Academic Year

Appeals for mid-year admissions cases should be lodged within 20 school days of receipt of the letter refusing a place at the school. All other arrangements regarding a hearing will follow the same process and a similar timeframe as those outlined above.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy will be monitored by the Local Governing Committee and Board of Trustees, who will always take due note of the guidance provided by the Local Admissions Forum.

The policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier in the light of any changed circumstances, either in our school or in the local area.