



ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS 2025-26

SERVE CHALLENGE EMPOWER

Document Control

Member Academies:

- Appleton Thorn Primary Academy (APT)
- Beamont Collegiate Academy (BCA)
- Bridgewater High Academy (BHS)
- Broomfields Junior Academy (BRO)
- Great Sankey Primary Academy (GSP)
- Meadowside Community Primary and Nursery Academy (MEA)
- Padgate Academy (PAD)
- Penketh High Academy (PHS)
- Penketh South Primary Academy (PSP)
- Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High Academy (STB)

Version	Date	Action
1	13/07/2023	Draft approved by the Trust Board.
2	07/12/2023 – 31/01/2024	Consultation with stakeholders. Amended to include St. Monica’s Catholic Primary School as a partner primary for Bridgewater High School. Consultation recirculated 19 th December 2023 closing 31 st January 2024.
3	08/01/2024	Trust Board approved final version for publication.
4		

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Aims	4
3. Legislation and Guidance	4
4. Definitions	4
5. How to apply	5
5.1. Secondary Academies	5
5.2. Primary Academies	5
5.3. Broomfields Junior School	6
6. Requests for admission outside the normal age group	6
7. Allocation of places	7
7.1. Admission numbers	7
7.2. Oversubscription criteria	7
7.2.1. Broomfields Junior School oversubscription criteria	8
7.2.2. Primary academies oversubscription criteria	9
7.2.3 Secondary academies oversubscription criteria	10
7.2.4 Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School oversubscription criteria	12
8. Children below compulsory school age - deferred entry, part-time attendance and summer-born children	13
9. Infant class size legislation – Key Stage 1 only	14
10. Challenging behaviour	15
11. Fair Access Protocol	15
12. Waiting lists	15
13. In-year admissions	15
14. Appeals	15
15. Monitoring arrangements	16

1. Introduction

The Challenge Academy Trust Board is responsible for determining the Admissions Policy for all its member academies. In undertaking this responsibility, Trustees will be guided by the law and will conform fully with the national admissions code. The Trust Board ensures that our academies comply with academy admissions legislation requiring local authorities to co-ordinate admissions arrangements in their area. In the Warrington area, the Trust is a member of Warrington Borough Council's Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme.

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain how to apply for a place at an academy in The Challenge Academy Trust for pupil admissions to the 2025-26 academic year
- Set out the arrangements for allocating places to the pupils who apply
- Explain how to appeal against a decision not to offer your child a place

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the following statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [School Admissions Code 2021](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

We are required by our funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the Academy Standards and Framework Act 1998. This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at a school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

Looked-after children are children who, at the time of making an application to a community school or academy, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

Previously looked-after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

A child reaches **compulsory academy age** on the prescribed day following their 5th birthday (or on their 5th birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

5. How to apply

The application process varies slightly across the Trust's academies.

In all cases, the admissions process for admission at the beginning of a year and for in-year admissions are managed on the Trust's behalf through Warrington Borough Council.

All applications should be made through Warrington Borough Council's on-line admissions system.

Information on the process is available on the Council's website [Schools | warrington.gov.uk](https://www.warrington.gov.uk/schools)

Before submitting your application, you are strongly advised to read the Parent's Information Booklet which includes useful information about the application process. A copy of the booklet can be viewed or downloaded by accessing the Council website at [Secondary school admissions | warrington.gov.uk](https://www.warrington.gov.uk/secondary-school-admissions) and [Primary school admissions | warrington.gov.uk](https://www.warrington.gov.uk/primary-school-admissions)

5.1. Secondary Academies

This section applies to the following academies:

- Beamont Collegiate Academy
- Bridgewater High School
- Padgate Academy
- Penketh High School
- Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School

For applications in the normal admissions round, you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools/academies are in). You can use this form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools in rank order.

Before submitting your application, you are strongly advised to read the Parent's Information Booklet which includes useful information about the application process. A copy of the booklet can be viewed or downloaded by accessing the Council website [Secondary school admissions | warrington.gov.uk](https://www.warrington.gov.uk/secondary-school-admissions)

For Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School only

Parents must complete the academy's own supplementary form in addition to the Local Authority Application Form. This form can be obtained direct from the academy or is available to view or download from the Council's website.

You will receive an offer for an academy place directly from your local authority.

5.2. Primary Academies

This section applies to the following academies:

- Appleton Thorn Primary School

- Great Sankey Primary School
- Meadowside Community Nursery and Primary School
- Penketh South Primary School

For applications in the normal admissions round, you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools/academies are in). You can use this form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order.

Before submitting your application, you are strongly advised to read the Parent's Information Booklet which includes useful information about the application process. A copy of the booklet can be viewed or downloaded by accessing the Council website at Primary school admissions | warrington.gov.uk

Please note, pupils already attending one of our nurseries **will not transfer automatically into reception in the attached academy** (or any of our other academies). A separate application must be made for a place in reception.

5.3. Broomfields Junior School

Broomfields Junior School's arrangements differ to all other academies in that most of their pupils transfer from Cobbs Infant School. Parents of pupils who attend other schools can apply to join Broomfields Junior School in Year 3 but pupils at Cobbs will have preference.

Pupils normally move to Broomfields Junior School from The Cobbs Infant and Nursery Academy having reached their seventh birthday by the 31st August.

Parents of children moving to Broomfields Junior School should submit the **infant to junior transfer application form** to Warrington Borough Council Admissions Team as part of the primary admissions process. In the event that the academy is over-subscribed, the oversubscription criteria in section 7.2.1 will be applied.

Opportunities are provided for children and parents to visit the academy prior to the move, together with an evening meeting to discuss opportunities for the pupils, alongside any issues or concerns with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and new class teachers. Broomfields provides the opportunity for parents to have a guided visit to the academy, believing it to be extremely important that the transfer process is dealt with as supportively as possible. Additionally, both the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher along with class teachers, visit The Cobbs Infant and Nursery School to meet and get to know their new pupils.

6. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group. Requests for admission outside the normal age group should be made at the same time as the application for an academy place is made and should be submitted to the home Local Authority Admissions team (for Warrington the email is schooladmissions@warrington.gov.uk).

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the circumstances of each case and 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
- Headteachers' 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 listed in section 6. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

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, but it is not in their preferred age group.

7. Allocation of places

7.1. Admission numbers

Our academies have the following published admission numbers (PAN) for entry in 2025-26:

Academy	Year of Entry	PAN
<i>Appleton Thorn Primary School</i>	Reception	30
<i>Great Sankey Primary School</i>	Reception	45
<i>Meadowside Community Primary and Nursery School</i>	Reception	30
<i>Penketh South Primary School</i>	Reception	30
<i>Broomfields Junior School</i>	Year 3	72
<i>Beamort Collegiate Academy (BCA)</i>	Year 7	180
<i>Bridgewater High School</i>	Year 7	360
<i>Padgate Academy</i>	Year 7	150
<i>Penketh High School</i>	Year 7	220
<i>Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School</i>	Year 7	175

7.2. Oversubscription criteria

Oversubscription criteria are used to establish an order of priority for allocation purposes when the number of applications for places at an academy is greater than the number of places available.

Children who have an Education Health and Care Plan would be admitted to the academy named in the plan over and above the published oversubscription criteria. The oversubscription criteria for the Trust's academies will be published in the parents' guides as follows:

7.2.1. Broomfields Junior School oversubscription criteria

This section applies to Broomfields Junior School only.

1. Child in Care (looked after children) and previously looked after children including those previously in state care outside of England*.
2. Children who attend Cobbs Infant School. For the admissions year 2025-26
 - pupils on roll as at 1st December 2023 will be considered first
 - children admitted after 1st December 2023 will be considered second
3. Siblings (pupils with elder brothers or sisters already attending the preferred academy and expected to continue at the academy in the following school year). This includes full, half or step-brothers and sisters and foster brothers and sisters who are living at the same address as part of the same family unit)
4. Pupils for whom advice from a medical practitioner or psychologist has been provided by the parents/carers at the time of application in support of admission to a particular academy, which, in the Admission Authority's view, justifies admission to the preferred academy. The Admissions Authority if it is considered appropriate, will seek the views of the school medical officer or educational psychologist in the event of parents requesting admission on medical or psychological grounds.
5. Children of staff where the member of staff has been employed by the relevant academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the academy is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
6. Pupils living nearest to the academy measured as a direct distance from the child's permanent place of residence to the academy measured using a geographical Information address point system based on the local and property gazetteer. This measures straight line (direct) distances from the address point of the permanent place of residence to the address point of the academy.

**A child in care 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 Services functions under section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making the application to the academy.*

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).

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.

Tie Breaker

Where an academy reaches its published admission number from pupils within one of the categories listed above, those pupils to be admitted from within that category will be those whose permanent places of residence are closest to the academy as defined in oversubscription criterion six.

A tie breaker must be applied to decide which applicant will be offered the last place at an academy when two or more applicants cannot otherwise be separated.

Distances will be measured in miles to 3 decimal places using a geographic information system (GIS). In the event of this measurement being the same for two or more applicants and the last place to be allocated would be to one of these applicants, a random allocation will be applied.

7.2.2. Primary academies oversubscription criteria

This section applies to the following primary academies:

- Appleton Thorn Primary Academy
 - Great Sankey Primary academy
 - Meadowside Community Primary and Nursery Academy
 - Penketh South Primary Academy
1. Child in Care (looked after children) and previously looked after children including those previously in state care outside of England*.
 2. Siblings (pupils with elder brothers or sisters already attending the preferred academy and expected to continue at the academy in the following academy year). This includes full, half or step-brothers and sisters and foster brothers and sisters who are living at the same address as part of the same family unit)
 3. Children who attend the nursery attached to the academy for a minimum of 15 hours per week (where relevant).
 4. Pupils for whom advice from a medical practitioner or psychologist has been provided by the parents/carers at the time of application in support of admission to a particular academy, which, in the Admissions Authority's view, justifies admission to the preferred academy. The Admissions Authority, if it is considered appropriate, will seek the views of the school medical officer or educational psychologist in the event of parents requesting admission on medical or psychological grounds.

5. Children of staff where the member of staff has been employed by the relevant academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the academy is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
6. Pupils living nearest to the academy measured as a direct distance from the child's permanent place of residence to the academy measured using a geographical Information address point system based on the local and property gazetteer. This measures straight line (direct) distances from the address point of the permanent place of residence to the address point of the academy.

**A child in care 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 Services functions under section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making the application to the academy.*

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).

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.

Tie Breaker

Where an academy reaches its published admission number from pupils within one of the categories listed above, those pupils to be admitted from within that category will be those whose permanent places of residence are closest to the academy as defined in oversubscription criterion six.

A tie breaker must be applied to decide which applicant will be offered the last place at an academy when two or more applicants cannot otherwise be separated.

Distances will be measured in miles to 3 decimal places using a geographic information system (GIS). In the event of this measurement being the same for two or more applicants and the last place to be allocated would be to one of these applicants, a random allocation will be applied.

7.2.3 Secondary academies oversubscription criteria

This section applies to the following secondary academies:

- Beamont Collegiate Academy
 - Bridgewater High School
 - Padgate Academy
 - Penketh High School
1. Child in Care (looked after children) and previously looked after children including those previously in state care outside of England*.
 2. Siblings (pupils with elder brothers or sisters already attending the preferred academy and expected to continue at the academy in the following school year).

This includes full, half or stepbrothers and sisters and foster brothers and sisters who are living at the same address as part of the same family unit)

3. Pupils for whom advice from a medical practitioner or psychologist has been provided by the parents (at the time of application) in support of admission to a particular academy, which, in the Admissions Authority's view, justifies admission to the Academy. The Admissions Authority, if it is considered appropriate, will seek the views of the school medical officer or educational psychologist in the event of parents requesting admission on medical or psychological grounds.
4. Children of staff where the member of staff has been employed by the relevant academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the academy is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
5. Where relevant, pupils attending an academy's partner primary schools. The nominated partner primary schools are:

Academy	Partner primary schools
<i>Beaumont Collegiate Academy</i>	Beaumont Community Primary School Bewsey Lodge Primary School Brook Acre Community Primary School Dallam Primary School Meadowside Community Primary School St Andrew's Church of England Primary School St Ann's Church of England Primary School St Margaret's Church of England Primary School Oakwood Avenue Community Primary School
<i>Bridgewater High Academy</i>	Appleton Thorn Primary School Broomfields Junior School (linked to Cobbs Infant School) Grappenhall Heys Primary School St Matthew's C of E Primary School St Thomas' C of E Primary School Stockton Heath Primary School
<i>Padgate Academy</i>	None
<i>Penketh High Academy</i>	None

6. Pupils living nearest to the academy measured as a direct distance from the child's permanent place of residence to the academy measured using a geographical information address point system based on the local and property gazetteer (LLPG). This measures straight line (direct) distances from the address point of the permanent place of residence to the address point of the academy.

**A child in care 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 Services functions under section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making the application to the academy.*

Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, (or became subject to child arrangements order or special guardianship order).

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.

Tie Breaker

Where an academy reaches its published admission number from pupils within one of the categories listed above, those pupils to be admitted from within that category will be those whose permanent places of residence are closest to the academy as defined in oversubscription criterion six.

A tie breaker must be applied to decide which applicant will be offered the last place at an academy when two or more applicants cannot otherwise be separated.

Distances will be measured in miles to 3 decimal places using a geographic information system (GIS). In the event of this measurement being the same for two or more applicants and the last place to be allocated would be to one of these applicants, a random allocation will be applied.

7.2.4 Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School oversubscription criteria

This section applies to Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School only.

1. Child in Care (Looked after children) and previously looked after children including those previously in state care outside of England.
i
2. Siblings of children currently attending the academy and expected to continue to attend the academy in the following year. This includes full, half or step-brothers and sisters and foster brothers and sisters who are living at the same address as part of the same family unit.
3. Children or whose parent/s worship in a Christian church. 'Parental worshipping' is taken to mean attendance at a minimum of 2 public worship services per month for at least 2 years prior to the date of application.

A Christian church means any church which is designated under the Ecumenical Relations Measure nationally by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York or locally by the diocesan bishop, or is a member of Churches Together in England, or the Evangelical Alliance, or a partner church of Affinity.

In the event that during the period specified for attendance at worship the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship, the requirements of these [admissions] arrangements in relation to attendance will only apply to the period when the church or alternative premises have been available for public worship.

Parents/Carers must complete a separate application form to meet this criteria and this must be signed by a Vicar, Rector or Minister of the church.

4. Children of staff where the member of staff has been employed by the relevant academy for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the academy is made, and/or the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.
5. Children attending primary schools associated with Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School, which are:
 - Alderman Bolton Primary
 - Latchford St James' Primary
 - St Elphin's C of E Primary
 - Oakwood Avenue Primary
6. Pupils living nearest to the academy measured as a direct distance from the child's permanent place of residence to the academy measured using a geographical Information address point system based on the local and property gazetteer. This measures straight line (direct) distances from the address point of the permanent place of residence to the address point of the academy.

**A child in care 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 Services functions under section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making the application to the academy. 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).*

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.

Tie Breaker

Where an academy reaches its published admission number from pupils within one of the categories listed above, those pupils to be admitted from within that category will be those whose permanent places of residence are closest to the academy as defined in oversubscription criterion six.

A tie breaker must be applied to decide which applicant will be offered the last place at an academy when two or more applicants cannot otherwise be separated.

Distances will be measured in miles to 3 decimal places using a geographic information system (GIS). In the event of this measurement being the same for two or more applicants and the last place to be allocated would be to one of these applicants, a random allocation will be applied.

8. Children below compulsory school age - deferred entry, part-time attendance and summer-born children

Children reaching the age of five between 1 September and 31 August may be admitted full time on the first day of the autumn term before their fifth birthday. To help children adjust, academies may phase the intake over the first few weeks of term with reception children

attending on a part-time basis. Arrangements are determined at academy level, but part-time attendance does not usually last longer than the first four weeks of term.

Flexibility exists for parents/carers who feel their child is not ready to start academy in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents/carers can request that the date their child is admitted to academy is deferred until later in that academic year or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory academy age. Parents/carers can also request that their child takes up the place part-time until the child reaches compulsory academy age.

Parents/carers may wish to explore the possibility of their summer born child starting school in the September following their fifth birthday i.e. so their child is educated outside of their normal age group.

If a parent/carer chooses to explore this option, they should discuss it with the academy they are interested in and the local authority as soon as possible. Parents should make it clear that they wish to apply for a reception class place a year later than the year into which the child could have been admitted.

The admitting authority is responsible for making the decision as to whether or not to educate outside of the normal age group based on the individual circumstances of each case. If the decision of the admitting authority is to refuse entry outside of the normal age group, the parent/carer does not have the right of appeal. The right of appeal is only available if they have been refused a place at an academy which they have applied for, not the year group.

9. Infant class size legislation – Key Stage 1 only

Infant classes must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single teacher. Additional children may be added under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an 'excepted pupil' for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The circumstances which would qualify a child to be considered as an excepted pupil are outlined in the school admissions code and are as follows:

- a) children admitted outside the normal admissions round with statements of special educational needs specifying an academy.
- b) looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round.
- c) children admitted, after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admissions authority or local authority in the original application process.
- d) children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal.
- e) children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available academy within reasonable distance.
- f) children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round.
- g) children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil.

10. Challenging behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that is not the normal point of entry, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behaviour that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, these pupils may be referred to the relevant Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to a child in Care (looked-after children), previously looked-after children and children with EHC (Education, Health, and Care) plans listing one of our academies.

11. Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Warrington Borough Council's Fair Access Protocol. This helps make sure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable, or having difficulty in securing an academy place in-year, get access to an academy place as quickly as possible.

12. Waiting lists

Waiting lists for oversubscribed schools will be maintained by Warrington Borough Council until the end of the autumn term i.e. 31st December 2025. This is because vacancies sometimes arise after the initial allocation of places has been made. Waiting lists are not held at academies after the end of the autumn term.

13. In-year admissions

You can apply for a place for your child at any time outside the normal admissions round.

In-year admissions are administered by Warrington Borough Council and information on the process can be found at [In-year transfers | warrington.gov.uk](https://www.warrington.gov.uk/in-year-transfers)

As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC plans name one of our academies would be admitted to the academy.

Likewise, if there are spaces available at the academy in the year group you are applying for, your child will always be offered a place.

Parents will be notified of the outcome of their in-year application in writing by the local authority within 15 school days.

14. Appeals

Warrington Borough Council administers all admissions appeals on behalf of all our academies.

If your child's application for a place at one of the academies in our trust is unsuccessful, Warrington Borough Council will inform you why admission was refused and provide information about the process for hearing appeals.

All information on appeals and the appeals process can be found on the local authority website [Schools admission appeals | warrington.gov.uk](https://www.warrington.gov.uk/schools-admission-appeals). If you wish to appeal, you must set out the grounds for your appeal in writing and email it to schoolsadmissions@warrington.gov.uk or send it to the following address:

Academies Admissions
East Annexe
Town Hall
Sankey Street
Warrington
WA1 1UH

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Trust Board every year.

Whenever changes to the admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the PAN), the Trust Board will publicly consult on these changes.

The Trust Board will consult on the admission arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there have been no changes during that period.