



## **ADMISSION POLICY**

### **Holmer C of E Academy**

#### **Introduction:**

The purpose of this policy is to set out in clear terms, Holmer C. of E. Academy's procedures regarding admission of pupils, ensuring a smooth and trouble free transition from pre-school to the Academy.

#### **Planned Admission number:**

The capacity for the Academy is 420 pupils. Our Planned Admission Number for the Reception Year is 60.

#### **Age of Admission:**

Parents are not obliged to take up places for their children any earlier than the law requires (i.e. currently from the term following their fifth birthday.) However, in Herefordshire most children start school at least a term earlier than the law requires. Children who become five in the Autumn term (between 1<sup>st</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> December) will attend school full time. Children who become 5 in the spring term (1<sup>st</sup> January – 30<sup>th</sup> April) or summer term (1<sup>st</sup> May – 31<sup>st</sup> August) will be invited to attend school full time. Parents are encouraged to send their children to school full time, from the beginning of the Autumn term. Once the Academy place has been allocated they have the right to choose the start time they feel appropriate for their child. Schools cannot require children to start sooner than parents wish.

#### **How to Apply:**

Parents are encouraged to visit the Academy before making their final decision. All parents of school age children will be sent a PA1 form by the Local Authority (LA). Parents fill in the form and send it directly to the LA. The parents are told by the LA which school their child / children will be admitted to.

#### **Allocation of Places:**

Children with a Statement of Special Education Needs which names a particular school will be allocated places, after which places are allocated according to an

Holmer C of E Academy

agreed set of criteria, in strict order of priority.

Priority 1- **Looked After Children** and Children who were looked after, but ceased to be because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order; (see Footnote 1)

Priority 2 - Children living within the **defined catchment area\*** of the school; (see Footnote 2)

Priority 3 - Sibling connection - Children who have an **older sibling\*\*** at the preferred school not only at the time of application but also when the younger child is due to start; (see Footnote 3)

Priority 4 - Pupils whose principal address is outside the catchment area and whose family is **at least monthly (over the last twelve months), involved in** the worship, life and work of a Christian faith church. **This application must be supported by a letter of confirmation from the appropriate church minister.**

Priority 5 – Pupils whose parent/s are employed by the Academy and have been for at least two years. (see Footnote 5)

Priority 6 - Pupils who attend the Holmer Pre-School based at the Academy (see footnote 6)

Priority 7 - Exceptional circumstances - Children with exceptional **medical, social or compassionate** grounds for admission and whose parents can show that entry to a particular school only is necessary for the well being of their child. Parents are required to produce a medical certificate or other appropriate information preferably from an independent source. Applications on such grounds will not be considered by the Director of People's Services or her advisory panel unless this supporting information is attached to application forms received by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014; (see Footnote 7)

Priority 8 - Distance\*\*\* - Children who live **nearest** to the school by the shortest available walking route. (See Footnote 8)

Holmer C of E Academy is its own admission authority. Parents are invited to consult the LA's "Information for Parents" booklet which outlines the legal rights of parents and other general information regarding administration and transfers to school. In its coordinating role the LA will offer places based on the rankings above.

### **Procedures Regarding Admission:**

The process of admission is assisted by Holmer's close relationship with local pre-school settings. Holmer staff endeavor to visit the pre-school settings of children who are due to take up places at Holmer. This allows staff to get to know children before admission. Pre-school records are transferred to Holmer C. of E .Academy. The children are invited to attend Holmer for a series of induction afternoons, in the

Holmer C of E Academy

summer term, prior to them starting. Additionally parents and children are invited to an early years assembly. A meeting is arranged in the summer term for parents to meet with staff and to discuss the ways the Academy and parents can work together to ensure that children's start at Holmer is happy and trouble free.

### **Review of Procedures:**

All procedures for admission are reviewed annually by the Academy in consultation with staff and the full governing body.

### **General Notes:**

**Footnote 1:** *This is the 1<sup>st</sup> priority because the Academy wishes to protect children who were or are in public care from further disadvantage that can arise from possible changes of school when the care placement changes.*

**Footnote 2:** *This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> priority because the Academy gives high importance to try to ensure that children are able to attend the school within their local community.*

**Footnote 3:** *This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> priority to recognise the importance to daily family life, including travel arrangements, of having brothers/sisters at the same school where possible. The rule is **not** intended to favour parents with a previous but no longer current family connection with the school.*

**Footnote 4:** *'Church' is taken as meaning an organised body subscribing to the doctrine of the Trinity, which is either a member of the local Christian Council / Council of Churches or affiliated to 'Christians together in England'.*

**Footnote 5:** *This is the 4<sup>th</sup> priority to recognise the importance of daily family life for employees of the Academy, including travel arrangements.*

**Footnote 6:** *This is the 5<sup>th</sup> priority to recognise the close links between the pre school and the Academy, and the high importance the Academy places on children being able to attend the school on the same premises as the pre school.*

**Footnote 7:** *This is the 6<sup>th</sup> priority to be sensitive to exceptional needs that individual children and families may have.*

**Footnote 8:** *The 7<sup>th</sup> priority is a measurable, objective way of allocating the remaining places.*

Where, at the Academy, applications exceed the number of places, the priorities will be applied in the sequence indicated above, i.e. after children who either currently are or were in the 'looked after' system it will be catchment area children second, brothers and sisters third, employee's children fourth, Holmer pre-school children fifth, exceptional circumstances sixth, then according to distance, each assessed as indicated above.

If the admission of the top two categories can be satisfied, but there are insufficient places for all out of area brothers and sisters, priorities will be decided first by reference to exceptional circumstances, then according to distance.

Following the allocation of the top category there may be an occasion when it is not possible to offer places for all children living in the catchment area. In this situation the places will be allocated in the sequence of the criteria listed above, i.e. first to children with brothers and sisters who would still be at the school in September 2014, next to employee's children, next to Holmer Pre School children, next to pupils with exceptional circumstances, and finally according to distance from the school.

In case where distance is not the final deciding factor i.e. two applications are at exactly the same distance then the final tie breaker will be a lottery undertaken by an individual independent of the People's Services directorate.

\*Living within the defined catchment area is defined as "a child residing with his/her Parent(s)/or carer(s) at his/her normal and genuine place of residence for the majority of the time".

\*\* A sibling connection refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or a child of the parents/carer's partner, and in every case the child should be living in the same family unit at the same address.

\*\*\* Distance will be measured by the shortest available walking route using a road and/or made up footpath from the front door of the child's address (including flats) to the main entrance of the school, using the Local Authority's computerised digital map measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority.