Document Title:	**Focus-Trust Admissions Policy**
Original date of ratification and Board	Operations & Finance Committee, 11th October 2023
Author:	Claire Chidzey-Carn, Head of Governance
Contributors:	DfE Policy guidance
Version:	1.0
Date of Production:	September 2023
Latest Review date:	September 2024
Policy approval level	Operations & Finance Committee
Date approved	December 2024
Amendment details (if applicable)	
Review period	Annually prior to 28th February each year
Post holder responsible for revision:	Head of Governance
Primary Circulation List:	Parents, Staff, Governors, Trustees
Identify if policy is on FT web site or School web site	Published on school website
Related Policies:	DfE School Admissions Code 2021 DfE School Admissions Appeals Code 2022
Key Purpose:	This policy sets out the admission arrangements for Manor Green Primary Academy, in **2027/28**. **It applies to applications to start in Reception in September 2027 as well as 'In-year' applications**; it also includes details of the oversubscription criteria, waiting lists and the appeals process.

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Statutory Guidance and Definitions
3. Application Process
   3.1 Normal Round - Primary (Reception)
4. Oversubscription Procedure and Criteria (All Applications)
5. Children Below Compulsory School Age and Deferred Entry to School

6. ‘In-Year’ Application Process
7. Waiting Lists
8. Unsuccessful Applications and the Appeals Process
9. Applications Outside of Normal Age Group
10. Further Information and Contact Details

i. Introduction

i. Thank you for your interest in applying for a place at Manor Green Primary Academy. The aim of this policy is to provide clear guidance on the admission arrangements for a place at the school including information on timescales, deadlines and contact details for queries.

ii. It also provides guidance on how applications are administered, the criteria used to prioritise applications (where necessary), waiting lists and the appeals process.

iii. **Manor Green is a non-selective Primary school with a nursery. The school has an agreed Published Admission Number[1] (PAN) for the following year group;**

Reception: 30

ii. Statutory Guidance and Definitions

i. All information in this policy meets the statutory requirements set out by the Department for Education (DfE) in the School Admissions Code 2021, ("the Code") and the School Admissions Appeals Code 2022, ("the Appeals Code").

ii. Focus-Trust is a charitable Multi-Academy Trust and is the admissions authority for all Focus-Trust schools, including Manor Green Primary Academy. FocusTrust, in accordance with its funding agreement, is responsible for the admissions arrangements of each school and co-ordinates with Local Authorities for the admission of pupils. For Manor Green the relevant Local Authority is Tameside MBC.

iii. According to the Code, there are two different routes for applications - **'normal round'** and '**in-year'**; each route has a slightly different application process and timescales. Both application routes are detailed separately in this policy.

'Normal round' is relevant to all applications for a place in Reception starting at the beginning of the Autumn term in September.

'In-Year' is relevant to applications;

a) for all year groups except Reception starting at the beginning of the Autumn term in September.

<u>or</u>

b) for any year group after the start of the Autumn term.

[1] The maximum number of places available for admission in the year group

iv. The nursery admissions process is separate from admissions to the rest of the school as it is not covered by the Codes. Please refer to the Nursery Admissions Policy on the school website for information on this process, see link below.

https://www.manorgreenprimaryacademy.co.uk/Parents/Admissions/

v. **PLEASE NOTE**: This policy is not relevant to the process for naming the school on a child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). There is a **separate process** for selecting or changing the school named on an EHCP which is outside of the admissions process. Please contact the child's home Local Authority for further details.

iii. Application Process

3.1 Normal Round – Primary (Reception)

i. Applications for a place at the school are administered through the Tameside MBC application process by completing the school admissions common application form (CAF). Parents resident in Tameside can apply online at http://www.tameside.gov.uk/schools/admissions; parents resident in other areas must apply through their home local authority.

ii. The Local Authority's timetable will be used for all normal round applications each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year).

iii. The school publishes information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, in February for the following September (e.g. in February 2027 for admissions in September 2028).

iv. **Primary application timeframe**:

The school has an agreed PAN of 30 pupils in Reception.

Autumn Term: The school provides opportunities for prospective pupils and their parents/carers to visit the school.

15th January (or next working day): National closing date for Primary applications. Deadline for the school admissions CAF to be completed and submitted to the relevant Local Authority.

January-March: The school and Local Authority coordinate to process all applications. If more applications are received than places available, they will all be ranked according to the oversubscription criteria published in this policy, see section 4 below.

PLEASE NOTE: schools are not able to provide any information regarding specific applications during this process.

28th February: Deadline for the school to publish its appeals timetable on their website.

16th April (or next working day): Offers made to parents/carers by the Local Authority.

vi. **Allocation of places**:

a) Where the school is named on a child's EHCP, that pupil will be admitted to the school.

b) The school will consider all applications for places. Where fewer applications are received than places available, the school will offer places to all those who have applied.

c) If the number of applications is greater than the PAN (places available), all applications will be considered, and places offered according to the oversubscription criteria in the order set out below (see section 4).

d) Where an application has been unsuccessful due to a place not being available, applications will be put onto a waiting list which will be maintained until the end of the admission year. The waiting list will be ranked solely according to the oversubscription criteria detailed in this policy, not date of application, and updated each time an unsuccessful application is added. See section 7 below for more details on waiting lists.

e) Where an application has been unsuccessful parents/carers have the right to appeal the decision to an Independent Appeal Panel. See section 8 below for detailed information on the appeals process.

iv. Oversubscription Procedure and Criteria (All applications)

If the number of applications received for any year group is greater than the number of spaces available, places will be allocated according to the oversubscription criteria and order below.

i. 'Looked After Children'[2] and children who have been previously looked after but immediately following this became subject to adoption, child arrangements order or special guardianship order, including those who

[2] A 'Looked After Child' 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 (see the full definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

appear (to the Focus-Trust) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted[3].

ii. Children and families with exceptional medical or social needs. Written evidence must be provided by a suitably qualified professional – e.g. a GP or consultant for medical needs, or a social worker for social needs – 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. A panel of SLT and Governors from Manor Green Primary Academy will make a decision as to whether to admit a child under this criterion, using the evidence provided. Parents/carers are responsible for providing all information in support of an application by the closing date, officers of the Council will not ask for additional information. All information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence.

iii. Sibling. This will apply where there are brothers or sisters attending the school at the time of application, who will still be attending at the time of admission, i.e. in the September when a pupil is admitted to Reception. Preference will be given to pupils living nearest to the school. The sibling criterion includes; natural sisters/brothers; half-sisters/brothers; step sisters/brothers; adopted sisters/brothers; sisters/brothers of fostered children; children of the parent/carer's partner, and in each case living at the same address. This allows for the admittance of children whose siblings will still be attending the preferred school.

iv. Distance measurement – Priority will be given to those children who live closest to the school.

Distance will be measured as a straight line from the child's home address, using the address point assigned by the National Land and Property Gazetteer, to the main gate to the school property. Measurements will be made using the local authority's school admissions data mapping software, which uses a Geographical Information System based on Ordnance Survey.

The address from which distance will be measured will be the permanent residential address, at the time of application, of the parent with whom the child is normally resident. Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, each for part of a week, the home address is the address from which the child travels to school for the majority of school days per week.

In the event of distances being the same for 2 or more applications where this distance would be the last place/s to be allocated, the place will be allocated

[3] Under the Admissions Code, a child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.

to the pupil that is nearer using walking distance as measured using the local authority's school admissions data mapping software.

In the event of two or more applications with distances, which are exactly the same competing for a final place, e.g. blocks of flats, the place will be decided by drawing lots, the first name drawn will be offered the place.

v. Where oversubscription occurs in applying either criteria 1, 2 or 3, priority will be given to those pupils living nearest the school, measured as a straight line (as above)

vi. Tie breaker: If Focus-Trust is unable to distinguish between applicants using the published oversubscription criteria, including those who live in blocks of flats within the same building, places will be offered via a random draw which will be supervised by someone independent of the school.

vii. In the case of multiple births or siblings in the same year group when there is only one place available, all will be offered a place even if this results in school admitting more children than the PAN

v. Children Below Compulsory School Age and Deferred Entry to School

i. All children are eligible for a full-time place at school in the September following their fourth birthday.

ii. A child must be in full-time education by the time they reach compulsory school age. A child reaches compulsory school age on the next prescribed day on or following their fifth birthday. The prescribed days are 31st December, 31st March and 31st August.

iii. When a place has been offered to a child below compulsory school age, parents can choose to defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the year. This date cannot go beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age or the beginning of the final term of that same academic year.

iv. When a place has been offered to a child below compulsory school age, parents can also choose for the child to attend the school part-time up until the child reaches compulsory school age, after which they must attend full time.

vi. 'In-Year' Application Process

i. The 'In-Year' application process is relevant to applications for places throughout the year outside of the 'normal round' process which is detailed in section 3 above. For Manor Green Primary Academy 'in-year' applications apply to;

a. Applications for Reception after the 1st September
b. Applications for Years 1 to 6 at any point throughout the year

ii. The Local Authority holds information on which schools in their area have spaces for each year group. Contact Tameside MBC via the link below for further information.

http://www.tameside.gov.uk/schools/admissions

iii. In-year applications to Manor Green Primary Academy can be submitted at any time and are made through Tameside MBC.

The In-Year application form can be accessed through the link below.

http://www.tameside.gov.uk/schools/admissions

iv. Manor Green Primary Academy will inform the Local Authority of any In-Year applications received, as well as the outcome, so that they can track vacancies across the area.

v. If an in-year application is refused the child will be added to the waiting list for that year group. A child's position on the waiting list will be determined solely according to the oversubscription criteria in this policy. See section 4 for the oversubscription criteria and section 7 for more information on waiting lists.

vi. If an In-Year application has been refused, the parent/carer has the right to appeal the decision to an Independent Appeals Panel. For detailed information about the appeals process see section 8 of this policy.

vii. **Fair Access Protocol:** Local Authorities are required to have Fair Access Protocols in order to make sure that unplaced, vulnerable children are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. The school complies with Tameside MBC Fair Access Protocol. Admissions under Fair Access Protocol are based on a case-by-case basis. This may mean admitting children above the PAN.

vii. Waiting Lists

i. Any child refused a place at the school will automatically be put on a waiting list (unless a higher preference school has been offered.) A waiting list will be maintained until the end of the admission year after which it will be cleared.

ii. **The waiting list is maintained in the order of the oversubscription criteria only** (not application date). This means that names can move down the list if, e.g. someone moves into the area and is higher placed under the oversubscription criteria.

iii. Parents/carers have the right to request their child is removed from the waiting list at any time. Once removed, the child cannot be reinstated on the waiting list without submitting a new application.

iv. If a place becomes available it will be allocated to the first child on the waiting list, in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. If that offer is declined the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list.

viii. Unsuccessful Applications and the Appeals Process

i. All applicants who have applied for a place at the school and been refused have a right to appeal that decision to an Independent Appeal Panel[4]. All appeals must be submitted in writing and include the grounds for appeal.

ii. Applicants will be informed in writing of the school's decision to refuse their application. This letter will include;
   a) The reason a place was refused (e.g. no available places)
   b) Information about the right to appeal
   c) The deadline for lodging an appeal
   d) Contact details for making an appeal

iii. Details of the appeals timetable is published on the school website by 28th February every year, see link below.

https://www.manorgreenprimaryacademy.co.uk/Parents/Admissions/

i. The deadline for submitting an appeal will be at least **20 school days[5] from the date of notification that an application was unsuccessful**. This deadline applies to 'normal round' and 'in-year' applications. Appellants will have at least 10 school days' notice of an appeal hearing and reasonable time to submit their evidence in advance. Decision letters will be sent within five school days after the appeal hearing.

ii. Appeals are submitted to http://www.tameside.gov.uk/schools/admissions

iii. The decision of the Independent Appeal Panel is binding on all parties.

ix. Applications Outside of Normal Age Group

i. Parents/carers may choose to seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group for a variety of reasons (e.g. the child is summer born, is

[4] Except where parents/career have applied for a place outside of the child's normal age group and a place has been offered within the child's normal age group.
[5] School days do not include weekends, national holidays or school holidays

considered gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health).

ii. The decision to admit a child outside of their normal age group is uncommon and will always be made on the basis of the unique circumstances for each specific case and what is best for that individual child. The decision will be made by the Principal [6] of the school and will take into account parents'/carers' views, expert advice from relevant social, educational and medical professionals, whether the child has previously been educated out of their normal age group, any evidence that the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely and the longterm impact of the decision on the child.

iii. Applications for a child to be admitted to a year group outside of their normal age group should be made through the same process set out in this policy for both 'normal round' and 'in-year' applications. However, in addition to the standard application form **further documentation should be provided to support the request for a place out of normal year group.** This applies regardless of whether it is for a higher or lower year group.

iv. Prior to making a decision, the Principal may request additional information after the submission of an application for a place out of normal age group, if necessary.

v. Each application will be considered on the individual circumstances of each case. Applicants will be notified in writing of the decision, including the reasons for it.

vi. Unsuccessful applicants have the right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are refused a place at the school. However, this right does <u>not</u> apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group and the appeal will only be considered for a place within the child's normal age group.

vii. The decision to accept an out of normal age group application lies with the Principal. As part of its monitoring role, the Local Governing Body on behalf of the Focus-Trust Board receive regular updates on school admissions, including the number of out of normal age group applications and the Principal's decision for each case.

[6] For this purpose, the term 'Principal' indicates the most senior leader of the school with responsibility for overall operational management. In some schools this may be the Headteacher, Acting Principal or Executive Principal.

x. Further Information and Contact Details

i. For queries regarding this policy, admissions arrangements for the school and the waiting lists and appeals process, please contact:

manorgreen@focus-trust.co.uk

ii. Further information and links to all relevant forms for admissions and appeals are available on the school website via the link below.

https://www.manorgreenprimaryacademy.co.uk/Parents/Admissions/

https://www.tameside.gov.uk/schools/admissions

iii. The Department for Education (DfE) website on school admissions – click here

iv. The DfE School Admissions Code 2021 - click here

v. The DfE School Admissions Appeals Code 2022 - click here