



## *St Stephens Community Academy* **Admissions Policy 2016-17**

The An Daras Multi Academy Trust (ADMAT) Company  
An Exempt Charity Limited by Guarantee  
Company Number/08156955

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Linked Documents and Policies	-



# Admissions Policy 2016-17

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Our Local Governing Body /Board of Directors are the Admission Authority for the academies within the An Daras Multi Academy Trust (ADMAT). They set the Admissions Policy for individual member academies. All decisions regarding the admission of children into member academies are made by a committee consisting of the Local Governing Body (SSCA) and Board of Directors (ADMAT). In determining the Admissions Policy the member academies and the An Daras Trust comply with current legislation.
- 1.2 St Stephens Community Academy (SSCA) Local Governing Body and Board of Directors applies the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend this academy. The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 introduced a new framework for school admissions as of September 2000. This was later revised in the Education Act of 2002. Our Admissions policy conforms to the regulations that are set out in that Act and are further explained in the statutory School Admissions Code of Practice and the statutory Appeals Code of Practice. These were revised in January 2003 and come into force in September 2004. In writing this policy we have taken into account the Department for Education's latest Admission Code which came into effect from 2014.
- 1.3 This document sets out to clearly state the following regarding admission to St Stephens Community Academy (note the two terms 'academy' and 'school' are interchangeable in this document and refer solely to St Stephens Community Academy):
- Admission criteria in the event of over subscription.
  - The method of applying and the way in which the application will be handled.
- 1.4 Throughout this document the following definitions apply:
- **"Parent"** is defined as the parent/s or guardians of the child.
  - **"Brother/sister/sibling"** is defined as children aged 4 to 16, living in the same family unit who has at least one natural or adoptive parent in common, living at the same address or different address. Children living in the same household at the same address where their parents are married or live as partners would be counted as siblings, regardless of their actual relationship to each other. To qualify as a sibling a child must be on roll of the school in question at the date of application, allocation and admission.
  - **"Looked after Children"/"Child in Care"/"Previously Looked After Child"** is defined as 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 definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) (c) has previously been a looked after child. A 'Child Arrangement Order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989. 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).
  - **"Home address"** is defined as the address of the adult/s with parental responsibility with which the child normally lives. The home address is that which applies at the time of application. Where children spend time with parents at more than one address, the address used to allocate

a school place will be the one at which the child is ordinarily resident. Where children spend equal time with both parents, the address used will be where the parent receives child benefit for the child and/or the child is resident for at least three nights per school week. Changes of address occurring shortly after application, but before offer of places, can normally be taken into account if notified in writing to the Local Authority Admissions Team or the individual academy directly. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of intended future changes of address, unless house moves have been confirmed through the exchange of contracts or the signing of a formal lease agreement. A temporary address will only be used for allocation purposes where no permanent address is available.

- **“Compulsory school age”** is defined as the age at which a child must start school – when a child reaches the age of five he/she must start school in the term following his/her fifth birthday (unless educated otherwise).
- **“Designated Area”** is the geographical area served by the Academy. It is sometimes called the catchment area. You should note that living within the designated area does not guarantee a place. Maps are available for all designated areas online at [www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions), following the link ‘What is my designated school?’ or by calling the Admissions and Transport Team on 0300 1234 101 or emailing [schooladmissions@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@cornwall.gov.uk).
- **“LA”** means Cornwall Local Authority.

## 2 Aims

- 2.1 St Stephens seeks to be an inclusive academy, welcoming children from all backgrounds and abilities. This is reflected in the published individual academy "Vision and Aims" statement (found on the academy website).
- 2.3 The only restriction placed on entry is that of number. If the number of children applying for entry exceeds the places available, the procedure set out below is used 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 choice. However, this is not always possible, due to excess demand on the places available.
- 2.4 A child’s level of ability is irrelevant to this academy’s admissions policy.

## 3 How parents can apply for their child to be admitted to St Stephens Community Academy

- 3.1 St Stephens has been an academy since January 2014, and it determines the admission arrangements in agreement with the Local Authority. The application process for admissions into Reception Year (the initial year of entry), is coordinated by Cornwall Local Authority (LA) which acts on behalf of the Local Governing Body/Board of Directors). Parents should apply online at [www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions) or submit a Cornwall Application Form available from St Stephens Academy or from the LA Admissions Team no later than the national closing date. Offers of places will be issued by the LA on the published offer date. Late applications (those submitted after the national closing date) will also be processed by the LA Admissions Team.
- 3.2 Parents wishing to visit St Stephens prior to submitting an application are welcome to do so. Visits are not interviews and do not affect any decision regarding the availability of a place. No interviews are held as part of our admissions process. All parents are advised to read the annual published LA Primary Admissions Booklet for Parents before submitting an application.
- 3.3 The annual LA Primary Admissions Booklet informs parents how to apply for a place at the school of their choice. Parents have a right to express their preference, but this does not, in itself, guarantee a place at that particular school. Over-subscription criteria are applied in the event of applications

going over our agreed **Planned Admission Number (PAN)** for St Stephens of **30 pupils in a single year group**. The Local Governing Body/Board of Directors agreed over-subscription criteria (in line with current LA maintained schools over-subscription criteria) for St Stephens can be viewed in this document, in the annual LA Primary Admissions Booklet and online at the Cornwall County Council website.

- 3.4 In this area, children enter school at the start of the academic year in which they become five. There is one admission date per year, early in September (i.e. when the autumn term begins). In order to qualify for entry into Reception children must have reached the age of four by the 31<sup>st</sup> August in that year. Therefore, parents who would like their child to be admitted to this academy during the year their child is five should ensure that they return the necessary application form to the LA by the national closing date.
- 3.5 In year admissions for children in year groups Reception through to Year 6 are arranged through parental application for a place to the LA (see the LA website for application forms). The academy itself does not determine the outcome of in year allocation decisions. Parents and the school will be notified by the LA if a place has been allocated at the academy. If the year group for which a place is being applied for already has 30 pupils then the request for a place will be refused.
- 3.6 The Admission Code 2014 requires us to state how requests for **placement outside the normal age group** can be made. Although most children will be admitted to the school with their own age group, from time to time parents seek places outside their normal age group for gifted and talented children or those who have experienced problems or missed part of the year, often due to ill health. While it would not normally be appropriate for a child to be placed in a year group that is not concurrent with their chronological age, the school will consider these requests carefully, and will make a decision based on the particular circumstances of each case.

#### 4 Priority Criteria

- 4.1 Children who have a Statement of Special Educational Need/Education, Health and Care Plan that names the academy must be admitted. Note children with a Statement of Special Educational Need/Education, Health and Care Plan that does not name St Stephens Community Academy will be referred to the Individual Needs Team at the LA to determine an appropriate place.
- 4.2 The following priority order will be used to decide which children should occupy any vacant places, after the admission of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need/Education, Health and Care Plan where the academy is named in the statement:
- **(1) Looked after Children/Children in care and children who were previously in care** but immediately after being in care became subject to an Adoption, Child Arrangement or Special Guardianship Order.
  - **(2) Children who live in the designated area** of the academy or whose parents can provide evidence at the time of making the application that they will be living in the designated area of the preferred academy by the date from which admission is required.

If there are more designated area children wanting places at a school than there are places available, criteria 3 to 5 below will be used to decide which of these children should have priority for admission. If there are still places available after all the designated area children have been allocated places, criteria 3 to 5 will be used to decide which of the remaining children should have priority for spare places.

- **(3) Children with an unequivocal professional recommendation** from a doctor, school medical officer or educational psychologist that non-placement at the preferred academy would not be in the best interest of the child and that placement at the preferred school is essential. Such recommendations must be made in writing to Cornwall Council, Admissions and Transport, East 0, County Hall, Truro, TR1 3AY and must give full supporting reasons.
- **(4) Children with siblings** who will still be attending the preferred academy at the time of their admission.
- **(5) All other children.**

4.3 In the event that there are more children in any category than there are places available, places will be prioritised and awarded to children who live nearest the academy. The distance for admission purposes is measured using the straight line measurement from the centre point of the main gate of the academy as determined by the Local Authority Geographical Information System endorsed by the academy. For families who live outside the area covered by the mapping system, distances are determined using a combination of local maps and on line resources.

4.4 St Stephens is committed to complying with parental preference in respect of parents living within and outside the local area, however if you are planning to move into the local area your application for a place for your child will not be given priority accorded to local area children without firm evidence of your new address and moving date, such as a copy of a signed and dated tenancy agreement or confirmation that contracts have been exchanged and a completion date agreed.

4.5 A child's attendance at St Stephens Pre- School does not guarantee that child a place in the academy.

## **5 Over-subscription**

5.1 For admission into Reception Year-September intake the LA on behalf of the Local Governing Body/Board of Directors, will offer 30 places to children. This is the Published Admission Number (PAN) for that year group. In the event that more than 30 applications are received, the over-subscription criteria will be applied to determine priority for places. All school preferences (as declared by parents on the LA application form) are treated equally, regardless of whether they are first, second or third preferences. When an application is refused, the child's details are automatically placed on a reserve list for the year group, ranked according to the admission criteria.

5.2 As part of the coordinated scheme for primary admissions, the LA Admissions Team will maintain the reserve list on the behalf of the academy, ranked according to the over-subscription criteria. The reserve list will be held until the end of the autumn term. Parents should contact the LA Admissions Team if they wish to remain on the reserve list beyond the autumn term. Parents will be contacted if a place becomes available for their child, but should be aware that their child's place on a reserve list may change if an application subsequently received that meets a higher criterion than their own or is subject to a successful Admissions Appeal.

5.3 If the criteria outlined previously leave more children with an equal claim than places available, the following tie-breakers will be used:

- **(1) All other children** - For children, where two or more children fulfil the same criterion, priority will be given to the child who lives nearer to the preferred school.
- **(2) Final tie-breaker** - Should the tie-breaker above still leave children with an equal claim because distances are exactly the same; random allocation will be used to decide on priority. Cornwall

Council's Random Allocation Protocol will be used and is available from the Council by request to the Admissions and Transport Team.

## 6 In Year Admissions

- 6.1 Applications for a place after the start of the school year or for any other year group are processed by Cornwall Local Authority, which acts on the behalf of the academy. The LA will contact the academy to check if places are available in the relevant year groups. Parents should apply online at [www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions) or submit a Cornwall Application Form available from the academy office or from the LA Admissions Team.
- 6.2 Offer of a place letters will be issued by the LA giving a start date and a period by which the place must be taken up. If a place at St Stephens Community Academy is offered, parents are asked to contact the academy so that the relevant paperwork may be completed, and a visit to the new class and start date can be arranged.
- 6.3 Parents wishing to visit St Stephens prior to submitting an application are encouraged to do so.
- 6.4 Parents wishing to apply for a place within the Area Resource Base (ARB) for children with severe and profound learning difficulties need to follow the guidance found on the ARB/Class 7 page on the academy website as the admission process **is not the same** as admission to mainstream classes.
- 6.5 The address of the LA Admissions team is
- *School Admissions Team, New County Hall, Treyew Road, Truro, TR1 3AY*

## 7 Additional Admissions Information

- 7.1 **Allocation to an alternative year group** – If there is no place available in a child's year group; the academy will not allocate a place in another year group unless there is clear evidence of need (see 3.6 above).
- 7.2 **Requests to transfer schools** – St Stephens will always discourage parents wishing to transfer a child from another local school as a result of a dispute with that school and will always request that the matter is discussed with the Head teacher of the child's current school. We believe it is better to address the problem and seek a solution rather than disrupt a child's learning because of a transfer.
- 7.3 **Equality Policy** – It is our policy that families of all backgrounds shall have equal consideration relating to all aspects of the running of the academy – including admissions. Our arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, anyone involved in the process from a particular social or racial group, religion or belief, gender or a child with a disability or special educational needs.
- 7.4 **Free school transport** – For the purpose of providing assistance with home to school transport, the LA has a defined catchment area for the admission process. Any child living within the LA defined area but more than two miles from the academy is entitled to assistance with transport. For more information contact the LA Admissions Team.
- 7.5 **Deferment to starting school** – Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the academy is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year. Parents can also request that their child attend part time until the child reaches

compulsory school age. If parents wish to take up these options they must make an appointment with the Head of School to discuss the arrangements in greater detail.

## **8 Admission Appeals**

- 8.1 If a child is not offered a place at the academy, it will be because to do so would prejudice the education of other children by allowing the number of children in the school to increase too much in a year group.
- 8.2 If parents wish to appeal against a decision to refuse entry, they can do so by applying to the LA using forms provided by the LA and/or the academy. An independent panel considers all such appeals, and its decision is binding for all parties concerned. If the appeals panel decides that we should admit a child to whom a place had been refused, then we will accept this decision and continue to do all we can to provide the best education for all the children at our academy. (Further details for appeals are set out in the revised Code of Practice on School Admissions Appeals 2012)

## **9 Infant Class Size Appeals**

- 9.1 In 1998 the School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA 1998) was passed which changed the legislation relating to infant class sizes. It is no longer permitted to exceed 30 children in an infant class with only one qualified teacher. Often a place is refused because of the infant class size rule. If appealed by a parent an independent panel will look at the decision made by the admission authority. The appeal panel can only overturn the decision to refuse a place if you are able to prove:
- The child would have been offered a place if the admission arrangements had been properly implemented; Or
  - The child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had not been contrary to mandatory provisions in the School Admissions Code and the SSFA 1998; Or
  - The decision to refuse a place was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.
- 9.2 Very few infant class size appeals are successful.
- 9.3 Under the revised national 2014 School Admissions Code, additional children may be admitted under very limited exceptional circumstances. These children remain as “excepted” pupils for the time that they are in an infant class or until class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The “excepted” children are:
- Children with Statements of Special Educational Need/Education, Health and Care Plans admitted outside the normal admission round;
  - Looked after Children/Child in care and Previously Looked after Children/Child in care admitted outside the normal admission round;
  - Children admitted, after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admission authority or Local Authority in the original application process;
  - Children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal;
  - Children who move into the area outside of the normal admission round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance;
  - Children of UK service personnel admitted outside of the normal admission round;
  - Twins and children from multiple births when one of the siblings is the 30<sup>th</sup> child admitted.

## **10 Children of UK Service Personnel (Armed Forces)**



For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting within the Launceston area, the academy will:

- Allocate a place in advance, if accompanied by an official government letter which declares a relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering area address for considering the application against our over-subscription criteria. This includes accepting a unit postal address or quartering area address for a service child;
- Ensure that arrangements support the government commitment to removing disadvantage for service children.

## **11 St Stephens Pre-School**

The above Pre-School and the academy operate on a shared site and there is close co-operation between the two providers. However, the offer of a place at the Pre-School does not guarantee that a place in the academy will be given nor does it imply any priority places at the academy for older siblings.

## **12 Children from Overseas**

The academy treats applications for children from overseas in accordance with European Law or Home Office rules for non-European Economic Area nationals.

## **13 Fair Access Protocol**

All local authorities are required to have a Fair Access Protocol which applies to all schools and academies. This document sets out how the local authority and schools will ensure that, during the school year, any children without a school place can be offered a place at a suitable school as soon as possible, even if the school is full. To find out more about the Protocol please visit [www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions) or contact the Admissions and Transport Team on 0300 1234 101.

## **14 Further Guidance and Contacts**

All parents are advised to read the annual LA Booklet for Parents on Primary Admissions. For further guidance please contact either;

- LA Admissions Team on telephone number - 0300 1234 101
- LA Admissions Team via email – [schooladmissions@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@cornwall.gov.uk)
- St Stephens Community Academy Office on telephone number – 01566 772170
- St Stephens Community Academy Office via email – [ststephens@andaras.org](mailto:ststephens@andaras.org)

## **15 Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be monitored by the Local Governing Body/Board of Directors and reviewed every year, or earlier in the light of any changed circumstances, either in our academy or in the local area. The policy will always take due note of guidance provided by the local Admissions Forum.

Reviewed and Agreed: **Feb 15**

Next Review: **Feb 16**