

School Admissions Policy 2023-24



www.matfordbrook.academy

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Haldon Reach, EX2 8XX

Matford Brook Academy

This policy is only valid for admission arrangements for 2023. For 2024 Matford Brook will follow the annual admissions policy review consultation in line with Devon County Council.

Matford Brook Academy is a 2-16 all through school based on the south west outskirts of Exeter. Opening in 2023 for the first cohorts of children in Nursery, Reception and Year 7, our all-through establishment models a 'cradle to career' approach with seamless support and opportunity for children throughout their school career.

At Matford Brook Academy, we write our story. Our mission to provide an excellent, all-through education that empowers children to believe they can, and should, change the world around them. We do this through the values of scholarship, kindness and community.

The Ted Wragg Multi-Academy Trust: transforming lives through learning

We are an **ambitious** and **inclusive** Trust of schools strengthening our communities through **excellent education**. Formally established in 2013, the Trust has grown to 13 schools located in Exeter, Plymouth and Credit working collaboratively with other local and national partners.

The Trust is responsible for the education of over 10,000 students aged 2 – 18. The Trust has the highest expectations for every child, every day, with social justice at our core.

Our mission is to transform lives and strengthen our communities to make the world a better place. We live by the values of being ambitious, selfless and collaborative.

Our schools are driven by an absolute determination to improve life chances for every child and they are identified by values driven inspirational leadership and rich and inclusive learning experiences.

Since joining the Trust all of our schools have identified significant improvements in terms of Ofsted, progress, attainment and attendance. More and more of our students are achieving their very best and making aspirational life choices, allowing them to flourish in a whichever path they choose.

Admission number(s)

The school has an admission number of 150 for entry in Year 7 and 90 in Reception.

Admission to Reception at Matford Brook Academy is made on the understanding that Matford Brook Academy is an all-through school and children will automatically transfer to the secondary phase of the school in Year 7.

The school will accordingly admit this number of pupils if there are sufficient applications. Where fewer applicants than the published admission number(s) for the relevant year group are received, the Academy Trust will offer places at the school to all those who have applied.

School Admissions Policies

Every school must have an admissions policy for each academic year. The admission authority must ensure that the practices and criteria used to decide on the allocation of school places are fair, clear and objective.

This policy is written to comply with the mandatory requirements of the School Admissions Code 2021, the School Admissions Appeals Code 2012 and all other relevant legislation so that:

- Parents know they must apply for a place and how and when to apply
- Parents know what will happen after they apply
- It is clear to all, including our school community, how many places are available
- Our school community understands our admission procedures
- We are committed to a fair, consistent and transparent admissions process

It should be read along with Devon County Council's Step by Step and In-Year Guides to Admissions, its Normal Round and In-Year Co-ordinated Admissions Schemes, its in-Year Fair Access Protocol and its Education Transport Policy. Once an admissions policy is determined, it can't be amended except where it is permitted or required under the terms of the Admissions Code. Any amendments will be detailed in the Key Information section above.

Application process

The local authority will process applications outside the normal local authority process for co-ordinating school offers. This means you will need to complete your LA common application form for this school and your other choices of school.

Applications for this school should be sent to Devon County Council Admissions at the following address admissions@devon.gov.uk.

The closing date for secondary school applications is 31/10/2022 and for primary school applications 15/01/2023.

Secondary school offers will be made on 01/03/2023 and primary school offers will be made on 17/04/2023. If we have not entered into a funding agreement with the Secretary of State opening the school by that date, they will be conditional offers and will be confirmed once we have a signed funding agreement.

The application form can be obtained from devon.cc/admissionsonline:
<https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/apply-for-a-school-place>.

Oversubscription criteria

The criteria in this section apply to entry at both phases of the school.

When the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care plan naming the school, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in priority order:

1. Looked after children¹ and children who were previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to adoption, a child arrangements order, or special guardianship order².
2. Priority will next be given to children based on their exceptional medical or social needs or those of their parents.³
3. Priority will next be given to those eligible for Pupil Premium.
4. Priority will next be given to children of members of staff⁴ who have been recruited within the past two years to fill a vacancy for which there is a skills shortage.

¹ These children are Looked After by or provided with accommodation in the exercise of its functions (seen the Children Act 1989 section 22 (1)) by a local authority.

² An adopted order is an order under the Adoption Act 1976 (see Section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (see Section 46 adoption orders). A 'child arrangements 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 as amended by Section 14 of the Children and Families Act 2014. 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).

³ To request this priority, the application must be accompanied by a completed Supplementary Information Form for Exceptional Need which will include evidence, from a medical specialist or social worker of the need and why the child must attend this school rather than any other, based on those needs. If evidence is not submitted to the with the application, exceptional need cannot be considered.

⁴ This will be any salaried person employed at this school. Where the duties of a member of staff are undertaken at different schools, there will be admissions priority only at one school. This will be at the member of staff's base school, where he or she undertakes duties for the majority of the time. Where that cannot be identified, priority will be at the school where he or she expects to work for most of the time in the current academic year. All members of staff are an important part of the school community.

5. Priority will next be given to any other children.

Tie-break

If in categories 2-5 above a tie-break is necessary to determine which child is admitted, the child living closest to the school will be given priority for admission. Distance is measured from the child's front door to the front gates of the school in a straight line.

Random allocation undertaken by the local authority will be used as a tie-break in categories 2-5 above to decide who has highest priority for admission if the distance between a child's home and the academy/free school is equidistant in any two or more cases.

Random allocation will not be applied to multiple birth siblings (twins and triplets etc.) from the same family tied for the final place. We will admit them all, as permitted by the infant class size rules and exceed our PAN.

Waiting lists

The school will operate a waiting list for each year group. Where the school receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until the end of the first term after the beginning of the school year. This will be maintained by the Academy Trust and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list will be reordered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria whenever anyone is added to or leaves the waiting list.

How to apply for admission – at the normal round

Parents apply for a place by completing the Common Application Form that is issued by the Local Authority (LA) where the child lives. For residents of another council area (including Plymouth and Torbay), parents must use the Common Application Form provided locally. This will be forwarded to Devon County Council. There is a National Closing date for applications. Applications can be submitted after this but will be considered as late, after all timely applications unless the parent can demonstrate that he or she was unable to apply on time. Applications for normal round admission are managed under Devon's Normal Round Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme. Decisions will be sent to parents on the National Offer Day by the Council where the child lives.

All applications received by the LA after the deadline will be considered to be late applications. Late applications will be considered after those received on time. If, following

This includes members of staff employed by a third party, whose duties are solely at the school.

consideration of all applicants the school is oversubscribed, parents may request that their child is placed on the school's waiting list.

How to apply for admission – in-year to any Year Group

This school will participate in Devon County Council's In-Year Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme for 2023-24. Please note that, for 2023-24, intake is only for Reception and Year 7.

After the normal round intake, parents apply for a place at this school by completing the Devon Common Application Form, regardless of where the child lives. This is available at www.devon.gov.uk/admissionsonline or by calling the LA for a paper version, the D-CAF. Applications can be made at any time after the Year Group has started⁵ but will not be processed sooner than 8 school weeks before the place is required.⁶ They will be considered in date order with all those received at the school or by Devon's School Admissions Team by 6pm each day considered together. The responsibility for decisions lies with the admissions authority for the school which may meet virtually (for example by conference call). Decision-making cannot be made by a single individual. Decisions will be sent to parents by Devon's School Admissions Service.

The school will notify the LA of numbers on roll in the school within 2 school days when requested to do so. This enables the LA to be able to advise parents. When notified of an application, a local Governing Board or admissions sub-committee will give the view of the school on whether a place should be offered within 5 school days. The responsibility for decisions lies with the admissions authority for the school. Decision-making cannot be made solely by email or by a single individual. This is to ensure that a decision can be communicated to the parent within 15 school days.⁷ If the decision is to refuse admission, the LA may then consider under its Hard to Place provision or under its In-Year Fair Access Protocol.

Appeals against a refusal to admit a child

Parents will have the right of appeal against a decision to refuse admission to a Panel that is independent of the school admission authority and the LA.⁸

An appeal for a place in Reception may be subject to Key Stage One or Infant Class Size Legislation. This limits the number of children in a Reception class (or a class where most children are aged 5, 6 or 7 years) to 30 children for each teacher. Key Stage One appeals are a more limited process which review the original decision to refuse admission rather than an appeal against the refusal in the light of additional circumstances.

The Appeal Panel will decide whether an additional child would breach the legal maximum of 30 children in a Key Stage 1 class with one teacher, whether the admission arrangements

⁵ This means after 1 September of Year 7 or of the Reception year, even if admission is deferred.

⁶ This will be 16 school weeks in advance for children of UK service personnel.

⁷ School Admissions Code 2021 paragraph 2.28

⁸ Where a child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools there is no need for an admission authority to comply with parental preference for a period of two years from the last exclusion.

for the school and LA were lawful and had been applied correctly and whether it was a reasonable decision to refuse the application in the circumstances that were known at the time the original decision to refuse was made.

There are limited exceptions which would allow a school to exceed 30 children in a Key Stage One class.

Appellants should contact Devon County Council Admissions on admissions@devon.gov.uk by 29/03/2023 for secondary and 22/05/23 for primary, for information on how to appeal. Information on the timetable for the appeals process is on the LAs website:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/apply-for-a-school-place>

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their normal age group. They should include a request with their application, specifying why admission out of normal year group is being requested. We⁹ will decide based on the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned. We will ask parents to provide as much supporting evidence as they wish to say why they are requesting admission outside the normal age group for a child. We will consider:

- The parent's views;
- The views of the school Headteacher;
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development submitted by the parent;
- Information about the child's medical history and the views of a relevant medical professional submitted by the parent;
- Whether the child has previously been educated out of their normal age group;
- Guidance from the Department for Education on the admission of summer-born children to Reception;
- Whether the child may have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

Parents should consider the implications of a child being taught out of the normal age group. Any school the child later moves on to will not be obliged to continue to educate their child out of the normal age group.

We will reach a decision on which Year Group is appropriate for the child. We will then reach a decision whether a place can be offered as it would for any application in that Year Group. Where we don't agree to early admission it will be our view that this is not a suitable school for the child at that age.

⁹ This means the admissions authority for the school. Some functions may be delegated to a committee or to officers within the LA.

Delayed Admission to Reception

Delayed admission is where a summer-born child delays admission into a Reception class until the start of the September after the fifth birthday and not the September after the fourth birthday. This means admission would be out of the normal age group. A summer-born child is one whose birthday is between 1 April and 31 August.

Parents of summer-born children can request that admission to Reception is delayed to the following academic year -the start of the next September term will be when the child reaches compulsory school age. We invite parents to visit the school so that we can explain the provision that is on offer to children in our Reception class, how it is tailored to meet the needs of the youngest children and how their needs will be met as they move through the school. This is an opportunity to discuss any concerns parents have about the child's readiness for school. Children in Reception and in an Early Years setting all receive the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum which is largely play-based learning.

As with any request for admission outside a child's normal age group, the admissions authority will have two decisions to make:

1. It must first decide on the age group the child should be admitted to
2. It then decides whether a place can be offered in that age group.

It can be difficult to reach a decision about the appropriate age group for a child more than a year in advance of admission as it will not be easy to assess how the child will develop in that time. Therefore, it will be helpful for parents to provide as much information on the child as possible, particularly with any relevant professional social or medical evidence.

The process for this school within the Devon County Council area is that the parent is encouraged to make an application for the child's normal age group at the usual time and make a request for delayed admission at the same time. This enables school admission authorities to reach a decision on age group before the national offer day. If the request is agreed, the application can be withdrawn by the parent before a place is offered and the parent will then make a fresh application in the next normal admissions round. If the request is refused, it is for the parent to decide whether to continue with an application for the normal age group OR to withdraw from that process and make an in-year application for admission to Year One for the following September. It may be that the admissions authority for another school agrees to delayed admission there, in which case the parent may pursue that option.

In reaching a decision, we will consider the circumstances of the case as we would with any request for admission outside the normal age group. Our decision will be made in the best interests of the child and will be set out in writing for the parent. We recognise, along with the Department for Education, that requests for delayed admission to Reception differ from other requests for admission outside the normal age group as it is only in these circumstances that a child is being admitted to school for the first time. Delayed admission is

not an opportunity for a child to retake the Reception year or an additional opportunity to seek admission here.¹⁰

There is no right of appeal if a parent is offered a place, but it is not in the year group they would like. They may make a complaint through the school's complaints procedure if they are unhappy with a decision.

Deferred Admission in Reception

Places for normal round admission are offered for full-time admission at the beginning of the September term after a child's fourth birthday. That is before children reach compulsory school age.

Deferred admission is where a child puts off admission into a Reception class until later in the same academic year until the start of the term after the fifth birthday. All parents have a right to defer the date their child is admitted, or to take the place up part-time, until the child reaches compulsory schooling age.

Parents are encouraged to discuss deferred or part-time admission with the school and any other professionals working with them.

Provided a parent informs a school that the place is to be deferred to the beginning of the spring or summer term, it will be held open until then. Places can be deferred beyond the start of the spring term or the summer term, depending on the child's birthdate. Please see the table below:

| Child's fifth birthday | Can defer admission or attend part-time until the start of term in |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 September – 31 December 2023 | January 2024 |
| 1 January – 31 March 2024 | January 2024 OR April 2024 |
| 1 April – 31 August 2024 | January 2024 OR April 2024 OR September 2024 by making a fresh application for a Year 1 place (from June 2024) or making a fresh normal round application for Reception in 2024-25 |

¹⁰ Requests for delayed admission will not be considered where a child has attended in a school Reception class for more than a half-term. This allows time for parents who are unsure about a child's readiness for school to try Reception. After half a term in school, we consider that a parent has taken up the child's offer of admission into school and we would not agree to delayed admission.

Options for Admission for Reception

Children who are below statutory age are entitled to a school place. This is in Reception from the September term on or after the 4th birthday. At this point, parents have the following options:

- To start full-time at the beginning of the September term.
- To start part-time at the beginning of term up to and no later than the end of the term before the 5th birthday.
- To defer admission within the Reception year to the beginning of term on or after the 5th birthday.
- To delay admission to the start of the September term of the next academic year (for summer-born children only).

Parents can choose to accept the offer of admission into Reception for part-time rather than full-time attendance until the child is of compulsory school age. It is for the school to decide what the part-time offer is and it is for the parent to decide whether to accept that part-time offer, for attendance to be full-time or for the offer of a place to be declined. Details of our part-time offer are available from the school office or on the school website.

Emergency arrangements

In the event that a local, regional or national public health lockdown is imposed, school admission and appeals arrangements may operate to amended timescales or under emergency regulations. Wherever possible, admission applications will continue to be processed under the terms of the In-Year Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme so that parents are not disadvantaged. Places will be held open until it is practical and safe for children to attend on site. Remote learning will be made available as for existing pupils although we recognise that in some circumstances, a parent may feel it is expedient to take up remote learning from the current school on a temporary basis.

Provision may be available for vulnerable and key worker children on site or at an alternative setting, according to circumstances at that time.

Notes

Home address:

The home address is where a child normally lives. Where a child lives with parents with shared parental responsibility, each for part of a week, the address where the child lives is determined using a joint declaration from the parents stating the pattern of residence. If a child's residence is split equally between both parents, then parents will be asked to determine which residential address should be used for the purpose of admission to school. If no joint declaration is received where the residence is split equally by the closing date for applications, the home address will be taken as the address where the child is registered with the doctor. If the residence is not split equally between both parents then the address used will be the address where the child spends the majority of the school week.

Medical and Social Need:

'Social need' does not include a parent's wish that a child attends the school because of a child's aptitude or ability or because their friends attend the school. 'Medical need' does not include mild medical conditions.

Pupil Premium Priority:

Those eligible for **Pupil Premium** admission priority are:

Children who:

- Are currently registered as eligible for free schools meals;
- Have been registered as eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years

Children for whom their parents cannot provide evidence that their child is currently registered for free school meals, [or has been in the past 6 years] but where the child or its parents receive any of the following:

- Universal Credit
- Income Support;
- income-based Jobseekers Allowance;
- an income-related employment and support allowance;
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income that, from 6 April 2011, does not exceed £16,190 (as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs);
- where a parent is entitled to the Working Tax Credit run-on (the payment someone receives for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit);
- the Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

Parents will be required to provide evidence of eligibility with their application.