**Brookside Primary School**

Ellesmere Port, Cheshire



**Admissions Policy**

(Determined admission arrangements for 2025-2026 for Cheshire West and Chester community and voluntary controlled schools)

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|  | **Brookside Primary School** |  |

**Admissions Policy**

**Admissions**

This policy covers admissions of children to the main school. Parents of potential pupils are welcome to visit the school by appointment and to see the children and staff at work.

In accordance with County policy children are admitted to school in September of each year. Children must be four before 31 August in the year of entry.

Children are invited to join us for some afternoons during the term prior to their admission; this provides an opportunity for the child to meet the class teacher and other children.

There are thirty places available at the Reception stage each year. Parental preferences are sought from the LA. There has been a large demand for places here and in recent years out-of-zone places have only been available to those whose brothers and sisters are current pupils at Brookside Primary. At times we are able to admit a limited number of out-of-zone places.

The Governors have adopted the County criteria for admissions:

**1**. **Pupils for whom there are exceptional personal/domestic circumstances** presented by the parents which justify, in the Council’s view, admission to a particular school.

**2. Pupils resident within the designated catchment zone** of the school, together with pupils for whom advice from amedical practitioner or psychologist has been provided in support of admission to a particular school which, in the Council’s view, justifies admission to the preferred school. The Council, if it is considered appropriate, will seek the views of the School Doctor or Educational Psychologist in the event of parents requesting admission on medical or psychological grounds.

**3.** **Siblings** – pupils with elder brothers or sisters including half brothers and sisters and unrelated children living together as part of one household already attending the preferred school, and expected to continue at the school in the following school year.

**4.** **Pupils living nearest to the school**, measured by straight line distance from the nearest available school gate to the pupil’s home.

**Determined admission arrangements for 2025-2026 for Cheshire West and Chester community and voluntary controlled schools**

**Part one**

Applications for school places for the normal admission round into reception the September

following the child’s fourth birthday, transfer to secondary school the September following the

child’s eleventh birthday and applications received for in year (i.e. into any year group outside the

normal admission round), shall be determined in accordance with the provisions set out below.

These admission arrangements apply to all community and voluntary controlled schools, as listed in

Part three, admissions within the borough for the school year 2025-26 and for subsequent years,

subject to any review.

**Compulsory school age**

Children reach compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday.

Under the council’s policy, children may start school in the reception class in the September

following their fourth birthday. Applications for admission are normally considered in relation to the

availability of places in the child’s chronological age group, other than in exceptional circumstances.

Parents can request that the date their child starts school in the reception class is deferred until later

in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year. Applications

for deferred admissions must be made by the published closing date. For parents and carers with

children born between 1 April and 31 August they should contact the authority to obtain information

on the ‘Summer Born Policy’ and for advice if they wish to consider delaying their child’s entry for a

full year. Parents and carers considering this option must apply in the child’s chronological year

group to ensure that they are part of the process should they decide not to delay their child’s entry.

The vast majority of children in Cheshire West and Chester are taught in their chronological year

group. To help younger children adjust to school, schools may propose to phase full time admission

over the first four weeks of term, admitting these children on a part time basis. However it should be

noted that parents have the right to insist that their child receives full time from the start of

September and that they also can request that their child attends school on a part time basis until

the child reaches compulsory school age.

**Secondary transfer**

For transfer to secondary school, children will normally transfer at the beginning of the autumn term

following their eleventh birthday.

In exceptional circumstances requests can be made for early or late transfer to secondary school.

Parents and carers considering such a request must in the first instance speak to the head teacher of

the child’s primary school. However, parents and carers must apply for a school place by the

published closing date. The application should include details of the request for a place outside of

the chronological age range to ensure that if early or late transfer is not agreed that their child is not

disadvantaged and is included in the secondary transfer process.

**Application process**

Applications from Cheshire West and Chester residents for places in local authority maintained

schools and academies, including applications for schools maintained by other local authorities,

must be made on the Cheshire West and Chester Council common application form. The application

process will begin on 1 September 2024.

As required by law, Cheshire West and Chester Council makes arrangements for parents and carers

resident within the authority’s administrative area to express up to three preferences for any English

authority school/s, ranked in order of priority, using the council’s common application form or online

application facility and to give reasons in support of each preference, including any supporting

documentation, before any places are offered.

Applicants not resident in an English authority or resident abroad should apply on the common

application form or online application facility to Cheshire West and Chester Council if they wish to be

considered for a Cheshire West and Chester school or academy. Applications received for the

admission of pupils who are not resident in Cheshire West and Chester authority are always

considered on an equal basis in relation to oversubscription criteria and deadlines as Cheshire West

and Chester residents.

**Acknowledgements**

An acknowledgement confirming receipt of applications can be provided on request from parents

and carers. A stamped addressed envelope must be provided. Online applicants will receive an

automated email acknowledgement.

Children with an education health and care plan

Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 requires the governing bodies of all maintained schools to

admit a child with an education health and care plan that names their school.

**Published admission numbers**

The council in relation to community and voluntary controlled schools have set published admission

numbers, which is the number of children that will be admitted into the relevant age group in the

normal admission round. If the Council receive an increase in applications in certain areas of the

borough, the council where necessary, will use its power as the strategic commissioner of school

places to temporarily increase the number of places available above the published admission

number. These increases will not constitute an increase to the published admission number as

stated in paragraph 1.4 of the School Admissions Code September 2021.

For applications received in year, which are those received after the first day of the school year into

the relevant age group or into any other year group, the published admission number will normally

continue to be applied as the relevant age group progresses through school. There may be occasions

when a school’s organisation permits the admission of additional children into an oversubscribed

cohort at the expense of places in an undersubscribed cohort. Should there be subsequent

application to the undersubscribed cohort it may not be possible to admit to the published

admission number.

Published admission numbers for Cheshire West and Chester maintained schools are listed in the

authority’s composite prospectus which is available on the council’s website at the start of the

application process.

All preferences made in accordance with the local authority’s admission arrangements will be met

except where this would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of

resources, when the year group in question is full. In some circumstances the local authority may

agree with the school that admitting further pupils will not adversely affect the school in the longer

term. In such circumstances, a preference will be met, even where the year group is full.

Unless the child is a permitted exception as defined in The School Admissions Code, September

2021, the local authority will not normally be able to agree admission over the published admission

number where to do so would result in a breach of infant class size legislation. The law requires that

infant classes, where the majority of children will reach the age of five, six or seven, contain no more

than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher.

**Oversubscription criteria**

Where more applications are received than there are places available and after the admission of

pupils with statements of special educational needs or an education health and care plan, where the

school is named in the statement, preferences for community and voluntary controlled schools,

together with any supporting information, will be considered in accordance with the council’s

published oversubscription criteria as follows:

• A looked after child or a child who was previously looked after by an English Local Authority

but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements

or special guardianship, order. A looked after child is a child who is in the care of a local

authority or being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their

social services functions, as defined in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989.

• A looked after child or a child who was previously looked after outside England but ceased to

be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements or special

guardianship, order. A looked after child is a child who is in the care of a local authority or

being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social

services functions, as defined in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989.

• Siblings. Pupils with brothers or sisters, step brothers or step sisters, half-brothers or halfsisters, adopted brothers or adopted sisters living together as part of one household, already

attending the preferred school in years reception through to year five in a primary school,

years seven to ten and year twelve in a secondary school and expected to continue at the

school in the following school year, at the time of admission. Siblings in year six and year

eleven will not be considered under this criterion for the normal admission rounds.

• Children resident within the designated catchment zone of the school. Children will be

classed within this category if they and their parents or carers are resident within the area

served by the school at the time of application. However, for the normal admission rounds,

the authority may consider a change of address providing the child is resident in the new

property and supporting documentation is received by 12 December 2024 for secondary

transfer and 20 February 2025 for reception applications, when the authority will begin the

allocation of places process.

• Children not resident within a school’s local catchment zone but attending a school

designated as a partner school for admissions purposes. (Only applicable for secondary

applications)

Pupils living nearest to the school measured in a straight line from the centrally plotted Basic

Land and Property Unit point of the child’s home address to the centrally plotted basic land

and property unit point of the school as defined by local land and property gazetteer.

Where a school cannot accommodate all pupils qualifying under one of the criteria stated above, the

next criteria will also be applied to determine priority for admission. For example, if a school cannot

accommodate all siblings for whom an application has been received, all sibling applicants will be

prioritised in the order of:

➢ Siblings who live within the school’s designated catchment area

➢ Siblings who do not live within the school’s designated catchment area

All applicants within each criterion will be put into distance order with priority being given to those

that live nearest to the school, as stated above.

Where it is identified that there are a limited number of places available and the local authority

cannot differentiate between the applications using the nearest school criterion, a random

allocation tie-breaker will be applied. This may be required for example, where applicants reside in

the same block of flats or separate addresses measuring the same distance from the school.

**Equal preferences**

All preferences will be considered on the basis of the equal preference model for allocating places, in

accordance with legal requirements. This means that in the first instance, all preferences will be

considered against the school’s published oversubscription criteria only, without reference to the

preference ranking. Where a pupil can potentially be allocated more than one school place stated on

the application form, the single offer, determined by the home authority, will be for the school

ranked highest on the application form by the parents or carers.

If the pupil is a Cheshire West and Chester resident and Cheshire West and Chester Council, as the

home authority, is not able to offer any of the preferences stated on the form a place will be

allocated at the nearest Cheshire West and Chester school (including faith schools) with known

vacancies using the authority’s mapping system for measuring straight line distances from the Basic

Land and Property Unit point of the home address to the Basic Land and Property Unit point of the

school in miles.

Where an application has been received from a parent resident in another authority and a place

cannot be offered, Cheshire West and Chester Council will not allocate an alternative school place.

**Children of multiple births**

In relation to children of multiple births, exceptionally it may be necessary to offer places over the

published admission number. This is to ensure that, as far as possible, siblings (twins, triplets or

children from other multiple births) can attend the same school. In normal circumstances the local

authority will not be able to agree admission over the published admission number where to do so

would result in a breach of infant class size legislation, which requires that infant classes, where the

majority of children will reach the age of five, six or seven contain no more than 30 pupils with a

single qualified teacher. However the School Admissions Code, September 2021 allows the

admittance of a sibling in the same school year (twins, triplets or children from other multiple births)

as a permitted exception where one sibling can be offered and not the other. This is a discretionary

permitted exception and may not be agreed if the admittance of more children into a particular year

group would cause prejudice to the efficient education and efficient use of resources to other

children in that year group.

**Children of UK service personnel**

Places will be allocated in advance of the family arriving in the area for children of UK service

personnel and veterans, 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

local authority oversubscription criteria. In addition it may be necessary to offer places above the

published admission number as the School Admissions Code, September 2021 allows the admittance

of a forces child as a permitted exception in relation to infant class size legislation. This is a

discretionary permitted exception and may not be agreed if the admittance of more children into a

particular year group would cause prejudice to the efficient education and efficient use of resources

to other children in that year group. Consideration for applications for children of UK service

personnel and veterans is given in accordance with the Cheshire West Armed Forces Covenant.

**Parents and Carers with shared responsibility for a child**

Where parents or carers have shared responsibility for a child the place of residency will be

determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the week, for example, where

the child wakes up between Monday to Friday. Full details must be submitted in writing to enable

the local authority to determine which address will be used for the purpose of admission.

A panel of officers will consider the information provided. If the panel agree that sufficient evidence

has been provided then this address will be used for the purpose of assigning a criterion to the

application.

Where the local authority is unable to reach a decision based on the information received, for

example, where a child lives equally with both parents, the address provided for claiming child

benefit and where appropriate, child tax credits or equivalent will be applied to the admission

application. In such circumstances, documentary evidence must be provided. Any delay in receiving

any required information will result in the local authority determining residence for the purpose of

admission based on the information available to it.

In the event of two applications being received for a child residing equally with both parents/carers,

neither application will be considered and the parents/carers will be asked to agree a single

application between themselves.

**Moving house**

Parents and carers must inform the authority immediately of a change of address, even if details of a

future change of residency were included on the application form as this may change a child’s

oversubscription criteria for a particular school. The authority will require supporting evidence to

show that the place of residency has changed, for example completion of sale, tenancy agreements,

council tax and utility bills and any other information considered relevant to the application,

including disposal of previous property. In addition proof that the child now resides at the new

property will be required i.e. child benefit or child tax credit. For normal admission round supporting

evidence must be received by the date as stated in part two.

In respect of applications made as part of the normal admission round, for example, into the

reception class in a primary school and into year seven as a secondary transfer in September for the

first time, information and supporting evidence must be received by the dates in part two of these

arrangements. Proof of residency received after the published dates will not be used to process the

application, but will be used to send the decision letter on the published offer date.

**Waiting lists**

Waiting lists will be held in oversubscription criteria order and not on a first come, first served basis.

A vacant place will be reallocated to the child with the highest oversubscription criteria on the

school’s waiting list on the day the place became available. Placing a child’s name on a waiting list

does not affect the statutory right of appeal. Waiting lists must be held until the end of the autumn

term.

**Normal admission round**

The normal admission round refers to applications made before the offer release date for admission

into the relevant age group i.e. into a reception class in a primary school or year seven in a

secondary school in September.

Waiting lists for oversubscribed schools will be prepared in line with the dates specified in part two.

Any child refused a school place will automatically be placed on the school’s waiting list. They will

also consist of children for whom an appeal has been received by the dates specified in part two

together with any late applicants.

**Changing preferences**

In respect of applications made for the normal point of entry, for example, into reception class in a

primary school or year seven in a secondary school for the first time, the local authority will not

accept a change of preference made after the published closing date without a genuine reason, such

as a recent house move. Full details must be provided to the local authority for consideration, along

with supporting documentation.

If the authority’s decision is that the reason, based on the evidence provided is not valid, then the

application will be treated as a late application and as such notification of the outcome of that

application will be after the accept/decline date as stated in part two. It is important therefore that

parents and carers give full consideration to the preferences they make on their on time application

form.

**Other relevant changes of circumstances, e.g. admission of a sibling**

Further information received after the supporting documentation deadlines, as stated in part two

will not be considered as part of the on time allocation process. The information will be assessed

after the accept/decline date and any changes that would assign a different criteria to an

application, for example, sibling, in catchment, will be applied to the application and used to

determine where the child falls on a waiting list.

**Late applications – Normal admission round only**

Late applications for places at Cheshire West and Chester schools, i.e. applications not submitted to

the authority by the relevant statutory closing date will be considered after all on time applications

unless the local authority considers that there are good reasons for the application being late, which

must be stated at the time of application, for example, exceptional medical reasons preventing an

earlier application, late removal into the area. Supporting documentation must be provided.

Where supporting documentation has been received by the date specified in part two of these

arrangements and the authority has accepted reasons stated for the late application, the application

will be considered as if it had been received on time.

Late applications and supporting documentation received after the dates specified will be

considered after all on time applications even where the authority accepts that there are good

reasons for the late application and as such these applications may be disadvantaged in the

consideration of their preferences.

Late applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application after the published offer date

specified in part two of these arrangements.

**In year applications**

In year applications are those received after the 1 September into the relevant age group or at any

time into any other year group.

Applications for admission are normally considered in relation to the availability of places in the

child’s chronological age group, other than in exceptional circumstances. In exceptional

circumstances requests can be made for entry into a year group outside the chronological age range

of a child. Parents and carers considering such a request must in the first instance speak to the head

teacher of the school they will be applying for. The decision as whether it would be in the child’s

best interest to be educated outside the chronological year is determined by the head teacher of the

schools concerned in agreement with the parent/carer.

Parents and carers, irrespective of where they reside who are seeking in year school places for

schools and academies in Cheshire West and Chester authority are required to apply direct to the

school, academy or local authority. Parents and carers must either complete an application form

obtained from the school or complete an online application available via the local authority’s

website, which is directed to the school or academy for processing.

Waiting lists will be held for community and voluntary controlled schools in oversubscription criteria

order and not on a first come, first served basis. Any child refused a school place will automatically

be placed on the school’s waiting list and will be considered together with children for whom an

appeal has been received and any new applicants. Schools will be responsible for administering and

updating their waiting lists and must be clear to parents and carers as to how the waiting lists will be operated on an annual basis. A school place is not considered available until the school or academy

is able to remove a child from roll according to the local authority’s safeguarding protocol.

Parents and carers must notify the school if there are any changes in circumstances that would

impact their oversubscription criteria for the waiting list.

The holding of in year waiting lists for aided, foundation, studio, free schools and academies will be

determined by the school or academy.

**Right of appeal**

Parents and carers who are not offered a place for their child at a school stated as a preference have

a right of appeal to an independent appeals panel. Parents can submit an appeal in respect of each

school for which admission has been refused. Application forms to appeal against a decision by the

local authority to refuse admission to a community or voluntary controlled school are available on

the authority’s website or can be obtained by contacting the authority. All appeal application forms

for community or voluntary controlled schools must be returned to the school admissions team

within 20 school days of the issue of the refusal notification.

**Repeat applications and appeals**

Repeat applications and appeals will not be considered within the same school year, unless the

parent, carer or school’s circumstances have changed significantly since the original application was

made. Full details of the change of circumstances must be provided for consideration by the local

authority.

Vacancies occurring in a year group which was fully subscribed at the time of the initial application

will be deemed to constitute a significant change in the school’s circumstances and a repeat

application will be permitted.

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| **Part two Timetable for applying for school places for the normal admission rounds** | **Secondary transfers** | **Primary admissions** |
| Application process starts. Online application facility opens and paper application forms available.  Composite prospectus available | 1 September 2024 | 1 September 2024 |
| Closing date for applications | 31 October 2024\* | 15 January 2025\* |
| Deadline for receipt of supporting documentation.  Information received after this date will not be considered until after the accept/decline date listed below | 12 December 2024 | 20 February 2025 |
| Allocations to be finalised | 17 February 2025 | 28 March 2025 |
| Offers released  Parents will be informed of the school place offered either:   * • By letter to those parents and carers who have applied using a paper application form and to those online applicants who have requested their offer by letter * • By email to those parents and carers who have applied using the web based online facility. In addition, online applicants can view their offer on this day by logging in to their online account | 3 March 2025\*\* | 16 April 2025\*\* |
| Waiting lists prepared and vacancies re-allocated.  Waiting lists will be held in criteria order. | After 3 March 2025 | After 16 April 2025 |
| Deadline for application appeals against local authority / governing body decisions | 31 March 2025 | 21 May 2025 |
| Appeal hearings (on time applications) | By 19 June 2025 | By 23 July 2025 |
| Appeal hearings (late and in year applications) | Within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged | Within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged |
| Late applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application after this date | After 3 March 2025 | After 16 April 2025 |

\*National closing date

\*\*In accordance with regulations which state that offers must be posted out on these dates except where these dates fall on a Saturday or Sunday and offers must be posted on the next working day

All dates will be reviewed on an annual basis in line with National guidance.