

Consultation on the changes to the Admission policy for Manston St James CE Primary School



These proposals would make changes to the current admission arrangements for the academy and **would be effective from September 2020**

We welcome all your views and encourage you to respond by the deadline of 15th January 2019

Consultation dates: 4th December 2018 to 15th January 2019

This consultation document tells you about the proposed changes and explains the decision making process

All comments and suggestions are invited and you can respond in writing to the school address or via email to: info@manstonstjames.co.uk

Abbey Multi Academy Trust, as the admission authority for Manston St James CE Primary Academy, is proposing the attached admissions policy which would apply to applications for school places for the academic year 2020/21.

THE PROPOSAL

We are consulting on the following proposals, and would like to hear your views and comments about these, so that we can decide whether to include these changes for the admissions policy for 2020/21:

- 1) Changes to the application process for school transfers (in year applications) so that all applications are submitted by parents to the Local Authority rather than to the school
- 2) To adopt the Local Authority term “catchment priority area” to be consistent with the Leeds City Council proposed policy for 2020/21. We propose following the Leeds City Council defined catchment area for the school, we will consider all responses made to our consultation and decide if any of these require our policy definition to be different to that of the Local Authority.

There are some changes which we must make to the previous policy so that it is accurate and explains clearly how places are offered. These changes are:

- i) Expanded definition of the children eligible to receive Priority 1 (CLA and Previously CLA) to include children previously looked after outside England, to be in line with 2018 DfE guidance
- ii) Clarified information about waiting lists and home addresses
- iii) Update to dates to ensure accuracy for 2020/21
- iv) Minor wording changes to provide further clarity for parents

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The consultation will last until 11th January 2018 and during this time parents and carers, local residents, and any other interested party can share their views about the proposals with the Trust.

We are asking you to tell us:

- Whether you agree or disagree with the proposal to remove the ‘nearest’ priority for applicants and introduce a catchment area priority instead
- Whether you agree or disagree that all school transfer applications should be submitted to the Local Authority who will then be responsible for notifying the requested schools
- Any specific reasons for those views

All responses to the consultation will be reviewed and considered, to inform the recommendations which will be made to the Trustees of Abbey Multi Academy Trust.

FURTHER DETAIL ABOUT EACH PROPOSAL

1) Defining the Catchment Area

Leeds City Council proposes to determine defined 'catchment priority areas' for the Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary schools in the city. Historically, the admissions policy for these schools has prioritised children who have the school as their 'nearest', over those who do not have the school as their nearest. There are 108 Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools for whom the Local Authority is the Admission Authority.

At Manston St James, we also currently prioritise children who have the school as their 'nearest', over those who do not have the school as their nearest. We propose following the Leeds City Council defined catchment area for the school, we will consider all responses made to our consultation and decide if any of these require our policy definition to be different to that of the Local Authority. Please see the map (appendix 1) for the current and proposed catchment area of the academy. You will note that for Manston St James there is no change to the defined area, therefore, the change we are proposing is to align the terminology used within our policy with that of the Local Authority.

Why are we proposing the change?

Defining the geographical areas as 'catchments' instead of 'nearest polygons' is felt to be clearer for parents and can be more easily understood. Catchment areas also help schools to identify their communities and give parents an indication of their priority school where they are more likely to be offered a place.

As with the existing 'nearest' priority, there is no guarantee of a place for pupils living within a school's catchment area or for pupils who move into the area at a later date. Living in a catchment area gives pupils a higher priority for admission to a school over other pupils who live outside the catchment area, when applicants are being prioritised for places but does not guarantee an offer of a place.

2) Changes to the application process for school transfers (in year applications)

The proposal is that all school place applications for school transfers outside the normal admissions round (in-year requests) are made, in the first instance, to the Leeds City Council Admissions Team.

Why are we proposing the change?

Applicants currently apply directly to the academy when they are requesting a place outside the normal admission round (in-year). The academy must then notify the family, and return the form to the Local Authority, indicating whether or not they can offer a place. At times, parents have reported that they apply to schools for a place but receive no response to their application, meaning that children are prevented from accessing a school place as quickly as we would like. Under the existing arrangements, the Local Authority is also unable to provide support to families to secure an appropriate school place as quickly as they would like. If the application was submitted to the Council, the Admissions team can notify all schools of the application at the same time, and then track those applications to ensure applicants receive a response in a timely way. Manston St James CE Primary Academy would retain the responsibility for offering a place or refusing and informing the family of this. This would create a more efficient and streamlined

process for parents/carers and ensure that all their preferred schools were aware of the application at the same time.

Changes to the admissions policy to ensure compliance with the admissions code

i) Expanded definition of the children eligible to receive Priority 1 (CLA and Previously CLA) to include children previously looked after outside England, to be in line with 2018 DfE guidance.

The DfE Guidance from 2018 is that this priority should include previously looked after children from abroad.

ii) Clarification of the information about waiting lists and home addresses

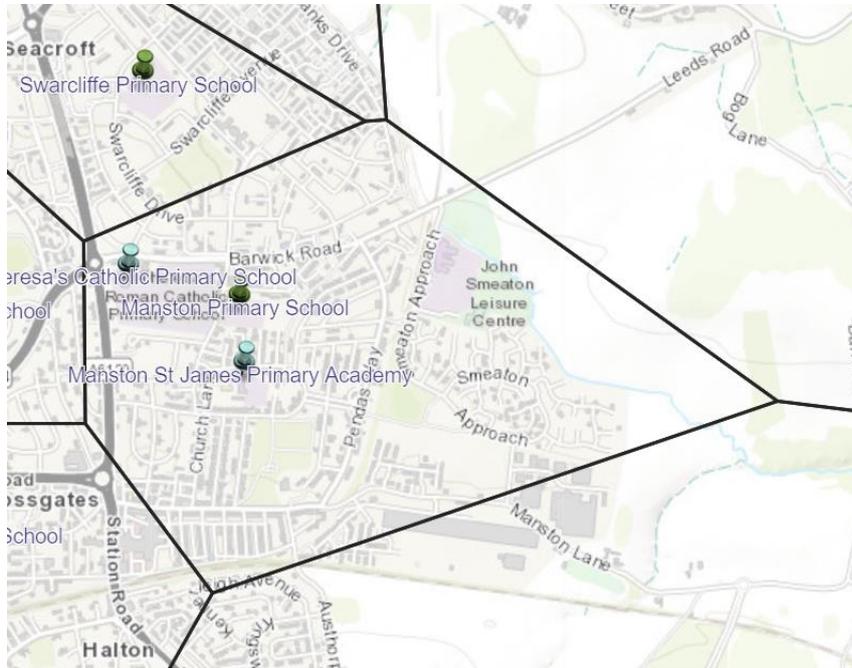
To provide greater clarity for applicants, the proposed policy includes further details about how applicants are added to waiting lists and how the lists are ordered. There is also more information about home addresses and incidents of shared care between parents.

What are the next steps in this process?

4 th December 2018 to 15 th January 2019	6 week consultation period. An opportunity to submit views/responses.
15 th January 2019 to end of January 2019	Analysis of the consultation responses received Recommendations made to the Trust Board on the arrangements to be determined
No later than 28 th February 2019	The Trustees of Abbey Multi Academy Trust will determine (approve) the 2020 admissions policy for Manston St James CE Primary Academy

Appendix 1 – Maps to show current and proposed areas

Current nearest priority area (defined by black polygon):



Proposed defined catchment area (area shaded red that encompasses Manston St James)

