

# **SWINDON ACADEMY POLICIES**

## **Admissions Policy for 2020-21 (L08)**

### **1. General**

- 1.1 This policy may be amended in writing at any time by agreement between the Secretary of State and United Learning.
- 1.2 United Learning will act in accordance with, and will ensure that the Independent Appeal Panel is trained to act in accordance with, all relevant provisions of the School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code published by the Department for Education (“the Codes”) as they apply at any given time to maintained schools and with equalities law and the law on admissions as they apply to maintained schools. For this purpose, reference in the Codes or law to “admission authorities” shall be deemed to be references to United Learning.
- 1.3 Notwithstanding any provision in this Agreement, the Secretary of State may:
  - 1.3.1 direct United Learning to admit a named pupil to Swindon Academy on application from a local authority. Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult United Learning.
  - 1.3.2 direct United Learning to admit a named pupil to Swindon Academy if United Learning has failed to act in accordance with this policy or has otherwise failed to comply with applicable admissions and equalities legislation or the provisions of the Codes.
- 1.4 United Learning shall ensure that parents and ‘relevant children’ will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of United Learning. The Independent Appeal Panel will be independent of United Learning. The arrangements for appeals will comply with the School Admission Appeals Code published by the Department for Education as it applies to Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools. The determination of the appeal panel is binding on all parties.
- 1.5 United Learning shall prepare guidance for parents and relevant children about how the appeals process will work and provide them with a named contact who can answer any enquiries they may have about the process. United Learning may, if it chooses, enter into an agreement with a LA or any other organisation for it to recruit, train and appoint appeal panel members, and to arrange for the process to be independently administered and clerked.

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1.6 In paragraphs 5 and 6 above, 'relevant children' means:

1.6.1 in the case of appeals for entry to a sixth form, the child, and;

1.6.2 in any other case, children who are above compulsory school age, or will be above compulsory school age by the time they start to receive education at the school.

## **2. Annual Procedures for Determining Admission Arrangements**

### **Consultation**

2.1 United Learning shall consult the following parties on the Academy's proposed admission arrangements for a minimum of six weeks between 1 October and 31 January of the school year before those arrangements are to apply.

2.1.1 Parents of children between the ages of two and eighteen;

2.1.2 Other persons in the relevant area who in the opinion of the admission authority (United Learning) have an interest in the proposed admissions;

2.1.3 All other admission authorities within the relevant area (except that primary schools need not consult secondary schools);

2.1.4 Whichever of the governing body and the local authority who are not the admission authority;

2.1.5 Any adjoining neighbouring local authorities where the admission authority is the local authority; and

2.1.6 In the case of faith schools, the body or person representing the religion or religious denomination.

Such consultation shall be in line with the requirements of the Codes and relevant admissions legislation.

2.2 For the duration of the consultation period, the academy will publish a copy of their full proposed admission arrangements (including the proposed Planned Admission Number – PAN) on the website together with details of the person within the admission authority to whom comments may be sent and the areas on which comments are not sought. The academy will also send, upon request, a copy of the proposed admission arrangements to any of the persons or bodies listed above inviting comment.

2.3 **Determination** – Swindon Academy will determine its admission arrangements by **28 February** every year, even if they have not changed from previous years and a

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consultation has not been required. Once the admission arrangements have been determined, the academy will notify the appropriate bodies and will publish a copy of the determined arrangements on the website displaying them for the whole offer year (the academic year in which offers for places are made). The academy will send a copy of their full, determined arrangements to the local authority as soon as possible before **1 May**.

- 2.4 Should the academy plan a PAN that is higher than in previous years, the academy will notify the local authority that they have done so and make specific reference to the change on the website.
- 2.5 Where Swindon Academy has determined the academy's admission arrangements and notified all consultees listed in paragraph 2.1, if any of those persons or bodies objects to the academy's admissions arrangements, including the proposed admission number, they can make representations to the Secretary of State. Any representations must be made by 15 May in the determination Year.

## **3. Publication of Admission Arrangements**

- 3.1 The published admission arrangements will set out:
  - 3.1.1 the name and address of Swindon Academy and contact details;
  - 3.1.2 a summary of the admission policy, including full oversubscription criteria and any arrangements for post-16 admission;
  - 3.1.3 a statement of any religious affiliation if relevant;
  - 3.1.4 numbers of places and applications for those places in the previous year; and
  - 3.1.5 arrangements for hearing appeals.

## **4. Procedure for Admitting Pupils to The Academy**

### **Admission Number(s)**

- 4.1 United Learning has the following agreed planned admission numbers for the academy for the year 2019-20 and, for subsequent years:
  - 4.1.1 **40** Full Time Equivalent pupils in Nursery for 2-year olds. This will consist of 80 part-time places. **24** Full Time Equivalent pupils in the Nursery for 3-year olds. This will consist of 48 part-time places. **60** Full Time Equivalent pupils in Nursery for 4-year olds. This will consist of 120 part-time places.

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- 4.1.2 **120** for pupils in Year **R** (FS1). This is made up of **60** pupils at Beech Avenue Site and **60** pupils at Alton close Site.
- 4.1.3 **60** for pupils in Year **7**. This number applies only to those being admitted from outside the academy. The total year group size will be 180 including children who transfer automatically from the academy's Year 6. If fewer pupils transfer from Year 6, the academy will admit over the admission number up to the overall size of the Year 7 group.
- Once parents have accepted a place in year 7 for their child, there will be an opportunity for pupils to take the entrance exam for a place in the Grammar Stream.
- 4.1.4 Swindon Academy has capacity for 300 pupils in the sixth form with 150 places in Year 12. It will not admit external applicants unless it is undersubscribed by pupils progressing from its own Year 11 and in such circumstances, it will apply the same academic entry requirements as it does to pupils already on roll in the academy. If a tie-break is necessary to determine who is admitted, it will apply the oversubscription criteria in paragraph 19
- 4.1.5 Swindon Academy also will admit up to 50 pupils on their Sports Academy Programme. These students will be under the pastoral care and academic scrutiny of Swindon Academy. The programme has its own published entry requirements which are based upon GCSE grades as well as a skilled based football assessment. Students failing to meet the grades for their preferred courses will be offered alternative courses if available at the academy or directed to other local colleges whichever is more suitable. The detailed information will be contained in the Sixth Form prospectus published annually.
- 4.2 In any specific year, United Learning may set a higher admission number than Swindon Academy's agreed admission number for an applicable year group. Before setting an admission number higher than its agreed admission number, United Learning will follow the procedure outlined in point 2.4.

### **Infant Class Size**

- 4.3 Infant classes in the academy (those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year) **will not** contain more than 30 pupils with a single school

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teacher. Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an “excepted pupil” for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The excepted children are:

- 4.3.1 children admitted outside the normal admissions round with statements of special educational needs specifying a school;
- 4.3.2 looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round;
- 4.3.3 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;
- 4.3.4 children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal;
- 4.3.5 children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance;
- 4.3.6 children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round;
- 4.3.7 children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil.

### **5. Process of Application**

- 5.1 Arrangements for applications for places at Swindon Academy will be on the Common Application Form provided and administered initially by the relevant local authority and then forwarded to Swindon Academy.

#### **Secondary Phase**

- 5.1.1 September - The academy will publish an online guide with details about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for the following September (e.g. in **September 2019** for admission in September 2020). This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective students and their parents to visit the school. The Academy will also provide information to the LA for inclusion in the composite prospectus, as required;
- 5.1.2 September/October - The Academy will provide opportunities for parents to visit the Academy;

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- 5.1.3 **31<sup>st</sup> October 2019** – National closing date for secondary school applications;
- 5.1.4 **28<sup>th</sup> February 2020** – Deadline to publish appeals timetable on the website;
- 5.1.5 **1<sup>st</sup> March 2020** – National offer day for secondary school places;
- 5.1.6 **15<sup>th</sup> March 2020** – Parent/Carer deadline for accepting places
- 5.1.7 **1<sup>st</sup> May 2020** – Deadline for Local Authorities to report to the Schools Adjudicator on admission arrangements in their area;
- 5.1.8 September – New intake starts at the academy.

### **Primary Phase**

- 5.1.9 Children will normally be admitted in the September of the academic year in which they will reach their fifth birthday. Swindon Academy will consider requests from parents to retain a place in the preferred school where the parents wish to defer their child's entry to a Reception Class until later in the same academic year, or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age. The effect is that the place will be held for the child and is not available to be offered to any other child. Where it is possible to offer a place, deferral will be supported if the request is made at the normal time of application. A parent may not defer entry beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday, nor beyond the academic year for which the application was accepted.
- 5.1.10 Where a child has been offered a place in Reception class, and where the parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.
- 5.1.11 The academy will use the following timetable for applications each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year) which, whenever possible, will fit in with the common timetable agreed by the Admissions Forum or LA:
- 5.1.12 December- Common Application Form to be completed and returned to the LA initially before forwarding to the academy to administer;
- 5.1.13 **15<sup>th</sup> January 2020** – National closing date for primary school applications;
- 5.1.14 **16<sup>th</sup> April 2020** – National offer day for primary school places
- 5.1.15 **30<sup>th</sup> April 2020** – Deadline for accepting places

### **Nursery**

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- 5.1.16 Children will be admitted to the academy's nursery on a part-time basis at the beginning of the academic year they become four. The academy will offer up to 120 such sessional places. All applications will be made on the academy's Nursery Application Form and submitted to the academy by the final term day in the December preceding the year of entry. Offers will be made to parents on the same date as indicated for the Primary Phase above.
- 5.1.17 2-year-old funded, and fee-paying children can be admitted to the academy's nursery in the term after their 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday. 3-year-old children can start nursery the term after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday in line with when government funding commences. All applications for 2 and 3-year-old places will be made on the academy's Nursery Application Form.
- 5.1.18 The taking up of a nursery place does not, in itself, give a right to a place at the academy for the Reception year. A separate application must be made for transfer from nursery to primary school.

### **6. Consideration of Applications**

- 6.1 United Learning will consider all applications for places at Swindon Academy. Where fewer than the published admission number(s) for the relevant year groups are received, United Learning will offer places at Swindon Academy to all those who have applied.
- 6.2 It is the expectation of Swindon Academy that a child is educated alongside his/her age equivalent peers, in almost all cases. We would strongly advise that all children enter into their normal year group. The responsibility for addressing individual educational needs lies with Swindon Academy through an appropriately differentiated and enriched curriculum.
- 6.3 A parent of a child born between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> August defined as 'summer born' may request for the child to be admitted to a year group later than that of their natural cohort. Where a parent of a summer born child wishes to admit their child into a year group lower than that of their natural cohort, they should make a request in writing to Swindon Academy as soon as possible prior to the deadline for applications - and no later than 1<sup>st</sup> September (for secondary admissions) or 30<sup>th</sup> November (for primary admissions). Any parent wishing to admit their child into a year group higher than that of their natural cohort should also make a request to Swindon Academy in the same

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way.

- 6.4 Swindon Academy will decide whether or not the individual child's circumstances make admission outside their natural cohort appropriate on educational grounds. All requests to educate a child outside their natural cohort must include evidence of the child's circumstances from a relevant professional detailing the child's educational need which makes education outside the natural cohort necessary. Parents must consider the impact of a child being educated with children of a different age and, for primary admissions, the impact on transition to a different secondary school where admissions outside the cohort cannot be guaranteed. Swindon Academy aims to respond to requests for admission outside the child's natural cohort within 15 working days. Where a request for admission outside the child's natural cohort is granted, the parents must apply during the normal admissions round for the year of entry; a place will not be allocated prior to the normal admissions round for the year of entry.

## **Secretary of State's Power of Direction (Academies)**

- 6.5 Where a local authority considers that an academy will best meet the needs of any child, it can ask the academy to admit that child but has no power to direct it to do so. The local authority and the academy will usually come to an agreement, but if the academy refuses to admit the child, the local authority can ask the Secretary of State to intervene. The Secretary of State has the power under an Academy's Funding Agreement to direct the academy to admit a child and can seek advice from the Adjudicator in reaching a decision. United Learning will follow this procedure.

## **7. Procedures Where Swindon Academy is Over-subscribed**

### **Primary and Secondary Phase Criteria**

- 7.1 Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admission number by site, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below. After the admission of pupils with statements of Special Educational Needs where Swindon Academy is named on the statement, the criteria will be applied in the order in which they are set out below:

- 7.1.1 A 'looked after child' or previously looked after children. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they



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were adopted (or become subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order) (see notes on page 11)

- 7.1.2 Children with a sibling attending the academy at the time of application. Siblings are defined in these arrangements as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters.
- 7.1.3 Other children by distance from the school, with priority for admission given to children who live nearest to the academy. The permanent address of the child is the child's main residence where he or she normally lives and sleeps and from where he or she goes to school from. Where parents have shared responsibility for a child and the child lives with both parents for part of the school week, parents will be required to provide documentary evidence to support the address they wish to be considered for allocation purposes. If there is a genuine 50/50 split shared arrangement in place, the address where the child lives is determined using a joint declaration from the parents stating the pattern of residence. In cases where an agreement cannot be agreed, and Child Benefit is claimed, the address that is registered for this claim will be used.
- 7.1.3.1 For Secondary admissions distance will be measured between the door of the student's permanent address and the entrance of the main gates of the academy secondary site, measured in kilometres in a straight line (as the crow flies).
- 7.1.3.2 For Primary admissions distance will be measured between the door of the student's permanent address and the entrance of the main gates of the academy primary site closest to the permanent address, measured in kilometres in a straight line (as the crow flies).
- 7.1.4 If two or more children are ranked equally on any of the above criteria, random allocation will determine which child or children are offered places. In this case, a child or children's names will be randomly selected from a total list of tied applicants by someone unconnected with the school.
- 7.2 If false or misleading information is used to gain entry to the academy, the offer of a place may be withdrawn.

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## **Nursery Criteria**

- 7.3 In the event of oversubscription, the following criteria will be applied in priority order:
- 7.3.1 A 'looked after child' or previously looked after children. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or become subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order) (see notes on page 11)
  - 7.3.2 Children with a sibling attending the academy at the time of application. Siblings is defined in these arrangements as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers or sisters.
  - 7.3.3 Other children by distance from the school, with priority for admission given to children who live nearest to the academy.
- 7.4 If false or misleading information is used to gain entry to the academy, the offer of a place may be withdrawn.
- 7.5 In the event of a tie-break being necessary within any criteria, this will be conducted through a process of random allocation.

## **Post 16 Progression Criteria**

- 7.3 The academy will publish specific academic criteria in relation to minimum entrance requirements for Year 12 based upon GCSE grades or other measures of prior attainment. The academy will also publish academic entry requirements for each course available based upon GCSE grades or other measures of prior attainment. Children failing to meet the grades for their preferred courses will be offered alternative courses if available. The detailed information will be contained in the sixth form prospectus published annually.
- 7.4 Children already on roll are entitled to transfer to Year 12 if they meet the published standards for entry.
- 7.5 There will be a right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel for any pupils refused entry.

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## **Operation of Waiting Lists**

7.6 The academy will maintain a clear, fair and objective waiting list for at least the first term of the academic year of admission; each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria. Priority will be given to children based on the date their application was received or their name was added to the list. Looked after children, previously looked after children, and those allocated a place at the academy in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol, will take precedence over those on a waiting list.

## **Arrangements for Admitting Pupils to Other Year Groups (i.e. other than Year R, 7 and 12, including to replace any pupils who have left the Academy)**

7.7 On receipt of an in-year application, the academy will notify the local authority of both the application and its outcome, to allow the local authority to keep up to date figures on the availability of places in the area. The academy will also inform parents of their right to appeal against the refusal of a place.

7.8 **Offering a place** – if the academy is oversubscribed, it will rank applications in accordance with the criteria (point 7.1).

## **Notes: Definition of 'looked after or previously looked after child'**

- 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 definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989) at the time of making an application to a school.
- This includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (see section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (see section 46 adoption orders).
- Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

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- See Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 which defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians)