

CASTLE MEAD SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS POLICY for 2017/18 ACADEMIC YEAR

**The Mead Community Primary
School
(Hilperton site)**

Hackett Place
Hilperton
Trowbridge
BA14 7GN
Telephone 01225 759273
office@themead.wilts.sch.uk

**The Mead Community Primary
School
(Wingfield site)**

Church Lane
Wingfield
Trowbridge
BA14 9LW
Telephone 01225 759273
office@themead.wilts.sch.uk

Castle Mead School

Mascroft Road
Hilperton
Trowbridge
BA14 6GD
Telephone 01225 768641
office@castlemead.wilts.sch.uk

River Mead School

River Mead
Lowbourne
Melksham
SN12 7ED
Telephone 01225 703428
office@rivermead.wilts.sch.uk

Policy Ratified: FEBRUARY 2016

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Mead Academy Trust has **three** schools:

- **The Mead Community Primary School** is a split site school with sites at **Hilpertown** and at **Wingfield**. Each school site operates from separate bases and each base provides for the full primary age range.
- **Castle Mead School**, Trowbridge
- **River Mead School**, Melksham.

The four sites will be treated as four separate schools for admissions purposes.

This Admissions Policy applies solely to applications for places within the **Castle Mead School**. This school offers all pupils access to an inclusive education designed to enable each child to reach their full potential. The school is responsible for determining its own policy.

In accordance with government legislation, this school consults with the Local Authority and other local schools in respect of the Admission Policy and in line with this adheres to the Wiltshire Council Co-ordinated Scheme for Primary Admissions **2017/18**.

The application round for entry into Reception 2017 opens on the 1 September 2016. The deadline date for applications to be received is midnight on the 15 January 2017. The home address given for the child must be the address where the child is resident as of the deadline date.

The aim of the policy is that it should provide clear guidance on admissions for parents/guardians, so that they may take the best decisions on the preferred school for their children.

a. **Designated Area**

This school aims to provide a place for all children whose address is within the designated area. A designated area is a discrete geographical zone served by a school. The address that determines a child's designated area is the place where she/he is ordinarily resident with his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) for the majority of the school week. Most schools have a discrete designated area but some addresses fall within areas shared by two or more schools. Children living outside the county boundary are treated as if the children live within Wiltshire but outside the designated area for the school(s) in question. Maps for each designated area are held by the Local Authority (LA).

b. **Preferences**

Parents will be invited to state up to three ranked preferences. The LA will consider all applications against the published admissions criteria without reference to how the school applied for has been ranked on the application form. As far as possible applicants will be offered a place at the school to which they have expressed a preference.

Where the applicant has made more than one preference, the LA will make an offer for the highest ranked preference school possible with available places, in accordance with the standard admission criteria. Where it is not possible to offer a place at a preferred school, and the applicant lives in Wiltshire, the LA will allocate a place at an alternative school. Allocations will be made after all expressed preferences have been considered. An

applicant will normally be offered a place at the designated school for their home address. An alternative school may be allocated in cases where the designated school is full and the alternative school is within the safe statutory walking distance and has places available or it is a school to which free home to school transport would be provided.

c. **Children with statement of special educational needs, or Education, Health and Care Plans**

Pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP), are required to be admitted to the school named on their statement. Once a statement/EHCP reaches the formal proposed stage the administration of the admission of the young person becomes the responsibility of the Statutory SEN Service at which point this policy ceases to apply.

d. **Published Admission Number**

A Published Admission Number (PAN) is agreed for each school annually and defines the number of places available for the year of entry. All applications must be agreed until the PAN has been reached and this figure will not be exceeded other than in exceptional circumstances, for example, a child living in the designated area for who there is no reasonable alternative place available, would be admitted. "Reasonable" in this circumstance is defined as a school within the statutory safe walking distance from the applicant's home address of two miles for children aged under eight and three miles for children aged eight or over, or it is a school to which free home to school transport would be provided. The Published Admissions Number (PAN) is:

45 School – Castle Mead School

e. **Address**

The child's address provided on the application form should be that of the child's normal place of residence. Only one address can be considered for application purposes. The address provided will be used to determine the child's priority for a school place. The Local Authority reserves the right to confirm the address provided by the applicant using the council tax reference number which is provided as part of the application.

For Year Reception September 2017 entry, the address used to determine priority of school places for on time applications submitted in the main round, will be the child's normal place of residence as at the deadline date of the 15 January 2017.

f. **Shared Parental Responsibility**

Where two (or more) adults both have parental responsibility for a child it is preferable that they should agree before submitting an application form which school(s) to name as their preference(s). In cases of dispute, or where two application forms are submitted, the LA will process the application received from the adult who has a residence order. If no such order has been made, preference will be given to the parent with whom the child is living for the majority of the school week.

If both parents are in dispute as to whom the child lives with the majority of the school week, the LA will process the application received from the adult who is in receipt of the child benefit, if this is not available then the address used on the NHS card will be used.

In the event of a further dispute regarding the address used, parents may wish to take independent legal advice on whether they should seek a specific issue order from the court to decide on where the child is schooled. For in year transfer applications, until any such order is made, the placement will continue in the best interests of securing educational provision for the child with a minimum of disruption.

For year of entry, where possible, a place will be offered in accordance with the preferences to the parent who can provide evidence that they are in receipt of child benefit.

g. **Multiple Births**

The LA will endeavour to place siblings born at the same time (eg. twins, triplets etc in the same school. If necessary the school will be required to admit over PAN to accommodate such children. In accordance with paragraph 2.15 of the School Admissions Code which came into force in February 2014, twins and multiple births will be classed as permitted exceptions to the Infant Class Size Regulations. This will only be the case when one of the siblings is the 30th child admitted, or the 60th child admitted.

h. **Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces)**

Applications for children of service personnel with a confirmed posting to the county, will be considered in advance of the family moving into the county if necessary. Where possible, an application must be included in the normal admission round.

An official letter, such as a posting note or letter of support from the commanding officer should be sent to the LA as soon as possible. This should include relocation date and Unit postal address or quartering area address (the address of the closest house in the nearest 'quartering area').

Until a fixed address is available, the Unit postal address or quartering area address will be used and a school place allocated accordingly.

This School adheres to the Local Authority policy and will not refuse a child of UK service personnel a place at either site because the family does not currently live in the area, nor will it reserve blocks of places for these children.

Children will be considered to be siblings if any brother or sister is going to be attending a school. Their position on any waiting list will be set accordingly. The sibling link will not apply if the child that is going to be attending the school will be in year 6.

All applications will be dealt with in accordance with these admission arrangements. If a reasonable alternative cannot be offered, the child may be admitted as an 'excepted pupil' under the School Admissions (Infant Class Sizes) (England) Regulations 2012.

2. **STARTING SCHOOL**

There is a legal entitlement for all three and four year olds to have access to fifteen hours free early education per week – available from registered child minders, school-based childcare, Sure Start Centres, pre-schools, day nurseries, playgroups or nursery schools.

- a) A school place will be made available for children from the September following their 4th birthday. Full-time education is available to all reception pupils.

The school will inform parents of the induction arrangements for new entrants to the Reception Class. These may involve a short period of part-time provision or a phased entry at the beginning of Term 1, which will normally be for a fortnight.

- b) Where 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.

Individual children's cases should be discussed by the parents(s) with the School directly.

3. JOINT ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS WITH PRE-SCHOOLS

A small number of schools enter into a formal joint arrangement with a pre-school or nursery to provide education jointly to children before they reach statutory school age. Such an arrangement usually involves each child attending school for some sessions each week and the pre-school or nursery school does not give priority in itself for admission to the partner school.

The date on which a child can be admitted to a joint arrangement must be no earlier than the start of the term following his or her 4th birthday but can be later than this.

Registration at any nursery or pre-school unit will not be considered as an application for a school place and no priority will be given to such children.

4. EARLY, DEFERRED OR DELAYED ADMISSION

a. Early admission

Admissions earlier than the autumn term following the child's 4th birthday may be agreed in exceptional circumstances, such as medical or social factors that have an adverse effect on the child. The request must have the approval of the LA's professional adviser and there must be no suitable alternative pre-school provision available. Early admission will be agreed for a maximum of one traditional term before the next available normal entry date.

b. Deferred admission until later in the academic year

Parents do not have to ensure their child receives full time education until the start of the term following their fifth birthday. However, parents have the right to start their child in school in the September of the academic year following their fourth birthday. In such circumstances, parents also have the option to start their child on a part-time basis or defer their child's entry until later in that academic year.

If a parent decides to defer their child's entry to the school that they have been offered until later in the academic year, that place will be held for the child and will not be offered to another child. However, please note that entry can not be deferred beyond the point at which their child reaches compulsory school age (for the avoidance of doubt the law states that a child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday [or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day]). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August). For children born between 1 April and 31 August, parents can not defer entry beyond the beginning of the April term of the school year for which the offer was made.

Please note also, that children who attend part-time until later in the school year can not do so beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

If a parent decides that they no longer wish to take up their child's place, they should inform the school and the Local Authority that the place is no longer required. The place will then be withdrawn and reallocated to the child who is top of the waiting list at that time. The parent must then submit a fresh application for a place in year one for the following academic year. The application can be submitted from April 2018, but will not be considered until at least June 2018.

c. **Admission of children outside their normal age group**

All applications for Admission of children outside their normal age group will be dealt with in accordance with the School Admissions Code, 2.17, 2.17a, 2.17b, which came into force on the 19 December 2014.

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child (born from 1 April to 31 August) may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to Reception rather than Year 1.

The decisions on requests for applications outside the child's normal age group are made by the Admissions Authority for particular schools. For this Academy school, the Admissions Authority is the governing body. The decision to admit outside of their normal age group is made on the basis of the circumstances of each case.

All parents who wish to apply for delayed entry into Reception must first submit a formal application via the Local Authority, and then the parent(s) should contact the school to discuss their request.

All requests should be made in the September following the child's 3rd birthday, in order to give sufficient time for the case to be considered by the admissions authority prior to the deadline for applications of the 15 January 2017.

Decisions will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

If the parental request for delayed admission into Reception is agreed, a separate application for a place in the next cohort would have to be made in the September following the child's 4th birthday. This application would be considered along with all the other applicants for admission in that year at the preferred school. There would be no guarantee that a place would be able to be offered in the school. If the school is over-subscribed and you are not offered a place, the Local Authority will make an alternative offer. However, please note that delayed admission in to Reception in the alternative school may not be possible.

If the parental request for delayed admission into Reception is refused, the formal application which has already been submitted will be processed, unless the LA receives a request from the parent to withdraw the application. If no request to withdraw the application is received, then after the offer of a school place had been made, the parent can then inform the Local Authority and the school that they want to defer entry as outlined above.

Right of Appeal for admission of children outside their normal age group - Parents who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied have the right of appeal to an independent Admission Appeal Panel. They do not have a right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like. However, if parents are dissatisfied with the outcome of the request for delayed entry into Reception, they have the right to complain against the decision through the Complaints Procedure for decisions made by council officers or under the School's Complaints Procedure where the school is the admissions authority.

All applications for children requesting admission outside their normal age group will be processed as outlined in Wiltshire Council's Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme, which has been drafted in line with the School Admissions Code. We will refer to the supplementary non statutory advice to comply with the admission of summer-born children. This is available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/summer-born-children-school-admission .

5. Deadline – applications received by the deadline date of 15 January 2017 will be considered as first round applications

The closing date for main round applications (i.e. applications for entry into Reception 2017) is the 15 January 2017. All applications received after the deadline of 15 January 2017, including those directed incorrectly to schools and not forwarded to the LA before the deadline, will be treated as late applications and considered only after those applications received before the deadline have been determined.

6. Oversubscription Criteria

Please note the oversubscription criteria will apply to this site only and not across all school sites operated by The Mead Academy Trust. Where a school site is oversubscribed, places are allocated to children in order of the ranked criteria listed below:

a. Looked After Children/previously Looked After Children - definition:

A 'Looked After Child' or a child who was previously Looked After but immediately after being Looked After became subject to an Adoption, Child Arrangements, or Special Guardianship Order 71. 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).

b. Vulnerable Children – definition:

Children from families registered with the National Asylum Support Service; Children or families with a serious medical, physical or psychological condition where written evidence is provided at the time of application from a senior clinical medical officer, general practitioner or specialist showing that it would be detrimental to the child or family not to admit to the School..

For the purpose of the above criteria the word 'families' is determined as living at the same address at the time of the application and also living at the same address on a permanent basis. Proof will be required and must be submitted by the deadline date.

c. Designated area siblings and shared area siblings

A child is considered under this criterion if a sibling is attending the School as at the deadline date and will continue to attend the School at the time of entry, and where the child lives within the designated area or shared area at the same address as the sibling. This includes step

siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address.

d. **Other children from the designated area or shared area**

Children resident within the designated area or shared area who do not qualify under one of the criteria above.

e. **Other Siblings**

A child is considered under this criterion if a sibling is attending the School at the deadline date and will continue to attend the School at the time of entry, and where the child lives at the same address as the sibling. This includes step siblings, foster siblings, adopted siblings and other children living permanently at the same address.

f. **Children of staff at the school**

A child is considered to fall under this criterion

- i. where the member of staff has been employed at the School for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to School is made, and/or
- ii. the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

If applicants wish to be considered under this criterion, then a letter from the Executive Head Teacher, or Head of School, confirming the above applies to the applicant, must be provided at the time of application.

g. **Other Children**

Children to whom none of the above criteria apply.

Tie Break - If the School is oversubscribed within any category above, the straight-line distance from the child's home address to the school will be used as the determining factor. Distances will be measured according to the Ordnance Survey eastings and northings for the child's home address and the School. Those living closer to the School will be given priority.

If two or more children with the same priority for admission live an indistinguishable distance from the School, but cannot all be admitted, then the available places will be decided by means of casting lots (random application). This will be undertaken by a School Business Manager, witnessed by a Trust Governor.

7. **Waiting lists**

Waiting lists will be maintained for all intake year groups in the school. Children will automatically be added to these lists if a preference higher than the school place offered has been refused. All applicants have the right of appeal against any refusal of a place. The existence of a waiting list does not remove this right from any unsuccessful applicant.

The position on a list will be determined by applying the published oversubscription criteria and not by date order of receipt. This will mean a position will change if a later application is received from someone with higher priority according to the oversubscription criteria.

Waiting lists for all year groups will close on 22 July 2018.

A fresh application can be made for a place for the next academic year group but this will not be considered before 6 June 2018.

Places that become available will not be offered to pupils who are not on the waiting list.

If your child is offered a place from a waiting list for the school, then you must accept or decline the place within 10 working days of the date of offer. If the place is not accepted then a further letter will be sent informing the applicant that should they not accept or decline the place within 5 working days, the place will be withdrawn. A further letter will be sent informing the applicant the place has been withdrawn.

Notes:

- Names will only be removed from the lists if a written request is received, or if the offer of a place that becomes available is declined.
- Registration of interest on the school's pre-admission list will not be considered as an application for a school place within the school.
- Parents must contact the school to obtain information on the existence of a waiting list.
- Except for service families, children will be considered to be living within the designated area for the school on receipt of an exchange of contracts or a signed tenancy agreement.
- Except for service families, children will not be considered to be a sibling unless their brother or sister is attending the school and is expected to still be in attendance at the chosen start date.

8. Applications for Reception 2017 Intake – applications received after 15 January 2017

Applications received after the deadline of 15 January 2017 will be considered as late applications.

Applications received between the 16 January 2017 and 23 April 2017 will be treated as second round applications.

Applications received after the 23 April 2017 will be treated as third round applications.

9. In Year Transfer Applications for year groups other than Reception 2017 Intake

Applications received after the 24 July 2017 for the year of entry and any applications received for other year groups are classed as transfer applications.

Other than in exceptional circumstances and in agreement with the two schools involved, a transfer will, if the applicant is not moving address, only be considered as being for the start of the next traditional term.

All applications will be considered together with any applications already on the School's waiting list.

Applications received at least one traditional term before the term in which admission is being sought are considered together and are ranked using the oversubscription criteria listed in section 2.

Applications received requesting more immediate admission are considered in the order that the School Admissions Team receives them. If more than one additional application for the School is received on the same date, places are allocated to children in order of the ranked criteria as listed in section 4.

In all cases parent(s)/guardian(s) will be invited to state up to a maximum of three preferences. An offer will be made at the school listed as highest preference possible, which has an available place.

If your child is offered a place at the school then you must accept or decline the place within 10 working days of the date of offer. If the place is not accepted then a further letter will be sent informing the applicant that should they not accept or decline the place within five working days the place will be withdrawn. A further letter will be sent informing the applicant the place has been withdrawn.

If your child is offered a place at the School and you accept the place, you must take the place up within 28 working days of the required admissions date stated on the original application form. Should the place not be taken up within the 28 working days the School will then write to the parents informing them that the place has been withdrawn.

10. **Proof of address**

The LA reserves the right to ask parents for proof of their address. If the parents' current address is different to that held on the LA's computerised system the LA may ask parents to provide proof of the new address if one is indicated. Acceptable proof of address includes:

- A copy of your Council Tax Bill
- A solicitor's letter stating contracts have been exchanged and specifying a completion date
- A signed and dated tenancy agreement plus proof of residency (e.g. copy of a recent utility bill)

If parents fail to provide proof of a new address, the LA will use the old address for admission purposes. If parents notify the LA that they will be moving house, even if they provide the relevant proof of that address, they must move into that property by no later than the end of the first term following the notification. The LA reserves the right to check that parents are living in the address indicated within that timescale. If parents are not living there, the applications will be investigated and the allocated place may be withdrawn.

11. **Fair Access Protocol**

The School will act in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol which has been adopted to give access to educational provisions for hard to place children.

If the Governing Body of the School refuse admission to a child with challenging behaviour (outside the normal intake round) the case must be referred to the LA for consideration under the In-Year Fair Access Protocol. This will normally only be the case where the school has a particularly high proportion of children with challenging behaviour or previously excluded children.

This protocol does not apply to a Child in Care (Looked After Child, a previously Looked After Child) or a child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, or Education, Health Care Plan, as these children must be admitted.

Further information on the In Year Fair Access Protocol including further criteria for referral, and a copy of the protocol, can be viewed at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

12. Appeals Procedure

Parents have a right of appeal to an independent panel against any decision made by the LA as to which education is to be provided for their child.

Information about the appeal procedure will be provided where a place at the School has been refused. Parents should contact the Customer Services Team (01225 713010) to obtain an appeals form which should be returned to the Democratic and Members Service team (D&M) at County Hall, Trowbridge. The Clerk to the appeals panel will be provided by the D&M Service team.

If a place has been awarded by the independent appeal panel the place must be taken up within 28 days of the required date of admission stated on the original application form.

Should the place not be taken up within 28 days the LA will then write to the parents informing them that the place at the School has been withdrawn.

13. Further Appeals

Parents who have appealed unsuccessfully can reapply for a place within the School in a later academic year, and have a right of appeal if unsuccessful.

Where there have been material changes in circumstances and the repeat application is considered and again refused, the parents will have the right to a fresh appeal.