



PACE Academy Trust

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# Beecholme Primary School Admission Policy 2023/24

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Beecholme Primary School  
(Part of PACE Academy Trust)

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Version	Date	Author	Note of revisions
V1	October 2019	TH	Policy updated in line with changes made by Merton Local Authority
V2	November 2020	ST	Policy updated in line with guidance from school admissions relating to changes in immigration rules following UK departure from EU
V2.1	July 2021	ST	Policy updated in line with changes to the 2021 School Admissions Code. Changes made include equal priority for 'Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After Children' (IAPLAC).
V3	October 2021	ST	Policy updated in line with changes to the 2021 School Admission code.

## Beecholme Primary School

(part of the PACE Academy Trust)

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### **Entry to Reception**

Beecholme Primary School participates in the Pan-London Co-ordinated Admission Scheme. Please see London Borough of Merton's Pan London Scheme on the Council website for further details regarding applications, processing, offers, late applications, post-offer and waiting lists. This document sets out the admissions policy for Beecholme Primary School for entry in 2023.

The Admission Number for entry into Reception in 2023/2024 is 30.

### **Supplementary Information Form**

A supplementary information form is not required for this school.

### **Entry to Nursery**

Beecholme Primary School has nursery provision on the school site. Children will be eligible for consideration for entry to nursery from the term after their third birthday.

The Nursery has 26 places available for children eligible for 15 hour government entitlement. This 15 hour funding is available as a Monday to Friday term time morning session. Children enter the Nursery in September of the academic year in which they are 4 years of age. The children attend 5 days each week during school term time and are based in classes of 26, each with a full time teacher and a teaching assistant. All children attend every morning session with an option to stay all day in sessional care. The additional flexible afternoon sessional care is available on request and subject to staffing levels; this can be accessed through the 30-hour government entitlement, childcare vouchers or paid session. The Sessional Care provision, which is managed by the Early Years Leader, is staffed by a Level 3 teaching assistant with an overall ratio of 1:8. Please contact the school office for more information.

If you would like to apply for a place for your child in our nursery, please complete an application available from the school website or school office.

Nursery offers for September 2023 will be made by the end of January 2023. When the nursery is over-subscribed, application for admission in 2023/2024 will be ranked against the same factors as Reception entry, please see below.

### **Admissions and Oversubscription criteria – Nursery and Reception to Year 6**

Where the number of applications for Beecholme Primary School is higher than the published admission number, the following criteria will be applied in the order set out below to decide the allocation of places.

Children with an Education, Health & Care Plan (<sup>1</sup>EHCP) or statement of special educational needs that names this school will be admitted to the school before the admissions criteria are applied to all other applicants.

1. **Looked-after children, and previously looked-after children** (see Note 1).

2. **Siblings:** children with a brother or sister who will be in attendance at the school at the time of enrolment of the new pupil (see Note 2).

3. **Exceptional Medical Needs:** pupils with exceptional medical reasons for needing to attend this particular school. For primary age pupils, a serious and continuing medical condition of a parent which would prevent them taking their child to school will also be relevant. Supporting evidence should set out particular reasons why the school is the most suitable and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. The medical reasons must be verified by a GP or consultant and declared **at the time of application** if known at the time. (see Note 3).

4. **Children of teaching staff at the school:**

a) where the teaching member of staff has been directly employed by the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or

b) the teaching member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. (see Note 4)

5. **Distance:** priority will be given to pupils living nearest to the school as measured in a straight line (see Notes 5, Note 6 and Note 7).

### **Tiebreaker**

In the event that the number of applications for places exceeds the number of places available after application of the admissions criteria, distance will be used to decide applications. Where more than one applicant has the same straight line distance measurement and distance is the determining factor, rank order will be determined by random allocation, which will be independently verified.

### **Note 1**

Looked-after children are defined as children in public care at the date on which the application is made, and previously looked-after children. Previously looked-after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangement order or special guardianship order, immediately after being looked after. This will also include children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted (also known as internationally adopted previously looked after children (IAPLAC)). If an application is made under the 'looked-after' criterion, it must be supported by a letter from the relevant local authority children's services department and/or relevant documents.

### **Note 2**

A sibling is defined as a brother or sister, half-brother or sister, step-brother or sister, foster-brother or sister or adopted brother or sister whose main residence is at the same address as the child for whom the school place application is being made.

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<sup>1</sup> An Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) are integrated support plans for children and young people with complex special needs and disabilities. The plan gives a detailed description of the range of difficulties a child is facing and the level and type of provision required to help the child make progress and achieve positive outcomes.

Children with siblings allocated a place in Reception to start in September will be eligible for priority under the sibling criterion from 1 August each year when the local authority opens waiting lists for the new academic year.

In the case of in-year admissions, eligibility for sibling priority will apply at the time of an offer. This criteria does not include siblings on the roll of the school's nursery class.

### **Note 3**

Claims for priority of admission on exceptional medical grounds will not be considered if submitted after a decision on the original application has been made. The decision to prioritise children on exceptional medical grounds will be determined by the school, after considering all available evidence, including submissions from health and education professionals.

All schools have experience in dealing with children with medical needs. In a very few exceptional cases, however, there may be reasons why a child needs to attend a specific school. If you feel there are exceptional reasons for your child to be considered for a priority placement at Beecholme Primary School, you must indicate this in the section provided in your application, giving reasons to support your case and complete the medical form, available on the School website.

All requests for priority consideration must be supported in writing by a doctor or consultant. It must be made clear in the professional support which school you are making a special case for, the reason why it is necessary for your child to attend this school in particular, and the difficulties it will cause for your child to attend another school. The evidence should explain exactly what the family's needs are and what specialist support or facilities are required.

It is for you to decide how to support your case and what documents to provide, but these must be submitted by the closing date. The Admissions team is not responsible for contacting professionals for information about your case. Any decision will be based on documents you submit by the closing date.

Under these criterion applicants who submit supporting information will not be advised whether their application is likely to be successful prior to the offer of a place by the offer day.

Providing evidence does not guarantee priority under this criterion; the Academy will consider if the evidence provided demonstrates that the child must attend this school and cannot reasonably attend an alternative school.

If evidence is received after the closing date, it will not be taken into account until after places have been offered.

### **Note 4**

Children of teaching members of staff will have priority in the oversubscription criteria if the teaching staff member has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or if the teaching member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

### **Note 5**

'Home' is defined as the address where the child normally resides as their only or principal residence. Addresses involving child-minding (professional or relatives) are excluded.

Parents will be asked to provide documentary evidence to confirm an address and parental responsibility. The authority should be notified of changes of address immediately. Failure to do so could result in the child being denied a place at a preferred school.

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 and the residence is split equally by the closing date for applications, the home address will be determined to be the address where the child is registered with the doctor. However, all evidence will be taken into account. 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. In some cases, where distance is a relevant factor in admission decisions, a different address may be used if a family unit owns or has access to another property.

Shared Custody: It is expected that where there is shared parental responsibility for a child, parents will agree which parent has the main responsibility before completing their application form. Where parents are separated and share custody, the parent with whom the child spends most of the school week (which will be the address where child benefit is payable) should make the application. An application can only be made from a single address and only one application can be made for each child. If the parent making the application lives at a different address, a letter of explanation should be given and signed by both parents.

Please note:

- Applicants in short term rented accommodation may be asked to provide evidence of their current and former housing arrangements.
- Where an applicant has ownership of a property, that should be used for the purposes of school admission, and the applicant must provide evidence and reasons for the use of any other address.
- Where an applicant rents a property and has ownership of an alternative property, the rented property will only be used for admission purposes if the child has been resident away from the owned property for a period of 3 years or more at the closing date for applications.
- Any applicant who moves from a rented or temporary address in advance of their child taking up their school place may have their place withdrawn if it is found the family have returned to an address already in their ownership.
- The authority will investigate whether the place should be withdrawn if the pupil is not resident at the application address at the time of the September entry point.
- The authority will always investigate a case where the application address has previously been used to gain a school place fraudulently.
- Where it is found an address has been used for the purposes of admission where the child is not ordinarily resident, the application and any place offered will be withdrawn.
- An offer found to have been gained fraudulently will be withdrawn. This may also be the case where the child has started the school.
- In some cases, places may not be withdrawn once a child has been attending the school for a term or more. In these circumstances future sibling applications will not be given sibling priority for places

and will be considered under the next appropriate criterion.

### **The processing of overseas applications for admission to school within the normal admissions rounds (excluding Crown servants)**

Applications from children overseas will be in accordance with relevant Immigration legislation and Home Office rules<sup>2</sup>.

Children and families of overseas nationals entering the UK who wish to apply for a state funded school should check they have a [right of abode](#) and that the conditions of any visa otherwise permit them to access education in a state funded school.

Applications with an overseas address can only be accepted for processing when Merton Local Authority is satisfied that there is evidence of a link to an address in its area and that the child will be resident at that address on or before the date of admission (i.e. start of September). Such evidence must include:

- Booked travel tickets and
- End of leave/notice to tenants in Merton property or
- Start of employment contract in the Merton area or
- End of employment contract abroad

The overseas address will apply until such time as there is evidence of a child's return to the linked address. In the event that a family does not return to the linked address provided by the start of September, Merton Local Authority will withdraw the application submitted and any offer made.

### **Applications from Crown Servants**

For Crown servants returning from overseas to live in the local area, the admissions authority will allocate places in accordance with relevant DFE guidance and the School Admission Code. For further information, follow the link [DFE guidance - admissions of Crown servants](#)

### **Note 6**

Distances will be measured in a straight line from the child's home address, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. All distances will be measured by the Merton computerised Geographical Information System. It should be noted that the computerised system measures from a start point plotted within the property at which the applicant lives to the main school reception entrance and calculates this measurement.

### **Note 7**

Childminding arrangements cannot be taken into account when allocating a place.

### **Children attending the nursery class attached to the school**

Attendance at our nursery does not entitle the child to automatic transfer to reception. If parents would like their child to be considered for admission to the school's reception class, they must complete the council's common application form (CAF) and name the school as one of the preferences. All applications are considered strictly in accordance with the school's admission criteria. Additionally,

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<sup>2</sup> Until 31 December 2020 all European Economic Area (EEA) and Swiss national children will continue to have the right under UK immigration law, to enter the country to access a school. Any EEA or Swiss national arriving in the UK by 31 December 2020 are eligible to apply to the EU settlement scheme, and where their application is successful, can continue to study in schools in England as they did prior to the UK departure from the EU. For more information, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions>

where priority in the admissions criteria is given to children with siblings at the school, this criterion does not include children with siblings in the nursery of the school.

### **Twins/triplets or other multiple births**

If you are applying for twins, or children from a multiple birth, and there is only one place available at the school, legislation allows us to admit them all i.e. all siblings from a multiple birth. The government's School Admissions Code does state that infant classes must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher, but the code considers multiple births to be an 'exceptional circumstance' and they can be admitted in excess of the published admission number.

If you are applying for a place for more than one child as a result of multiple births, you must complete a separate form for each child.

### **Waiting Lists**

All waiting lists are managed in accordance with paragraph 2.15 of the School Admissions Code and are ranked in accordance with the oversubscription criteria shown above. Children with an Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a statements of special educational need will take priority over children on a waiting list.

Waiting lists for entry to Reception in September 2023 will be maintained strictly in accordance with the admissions criteria for the school until the last day of the Autumn term. Parents wishing to remain on the waiting list after this date must write to the school by 31 December 2023, stating their wish and providing their child's name, date of birth and the name of their current school.

Thereafter, applications for Reception for the year 2023/24, and for other year groups will be considered through the mid-term admission process. For in-year applications, children with an Education, Health & Care Plan, those to be admitted through the borough's Fair Access Protocol, looked after children and previously looked after children will take priority over children on a waiting list. Waiting lists are then held according to the remaining admissions criteria for the school.

Mid-term waiting lists will be reviewed at the end of each academic year. Parents wishing to remain on the waiting list after this time must write to the school by the end of July, stating their wish and providing their child's name, date of birth and the name of their current school.

Children applying for nursery who are not offered a place will be automatically added to the school's waiting list. Nursery waiting lists will be reviewed before being carried forward to 2023/24 academic year, to confirm which autumn and spring born children wish to be considered for a place in the next academic year.

The School will advise Merton Admissions of its decision and issue an offer or no offer letter according to the criteria above.

### **In-year applications – Reception to Year 6**

If you wish to apply for a place at the school outside the normal admissions round you should complete London Borough of Merton's in-year application form, naming this school, and submit it to the Council, with any supporting evidence required. If there is a waiting list and/or more in-year applicants than places available at that time, the process of prioritising applications will be as described above.

### **Admission of children below compulsory school age deferred entry to school**

Children normally start full-time school at the beginning of the autumn term after they are four (e.g. they would join the reception class at the beginning of the 2023 Autumn term, when they had their

fourth birthday on or between 1st September 2022 and 31st August 2023). Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the application was made. Parents can also take up a part-time place until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age.

A child reaches compulsory school age the term after their fifth birthday.

Therefore, if you are offered a reception class place at a school, you can opt to defer your child's start date, but they **MUST** start full time school following their fifth birthday by the dates given below:

- children born on or between 1 September and the end of December must start full time school by the beginning of the spring term in January
- children born from 1 January to the end of March must start full time school on 1 April
- children born from 1 April to the end of August must start school at the beginning of the autumn term in September.

The school's expectation is that a child born between 1 April and 31 August should start the Reception class at the beginning of the summer term at the latest.

However, parents may choose that their child does not start school until the September (beginning of the autumn term) following their fifth birthday. Parents must note the place cannot be held open beyond the summer term, this will mean that as their child will be a year one pupil when they join, parents will need to apply for a year one school place, using the in-year application form.

### **Admission of children outside their normal age group**

Parents may request that their child is exceptionally admitted outside their normal age group. Beecholme Primary School will decide whether or not the individual child's circumstances make this appropriate on educational grounds.

It is the expectation of Beecholme Primary School 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 the school through an appropriately differentiated and enriched curriculum.

All requests to educate a child outside their normal year group must include written explanation of why this is necessary and where applicable, evidence of the child's circumstances from a relevant professional detailing the child's educational need which makes education outside the normal age group necessary.

Decisions are made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interest of the child. This includes taking account of the following:

- Parents' view;
- Information relating to the child's academic, social and emotional development, where relevant;
- Medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- Any previous history of being educated outside of their normal age group;
- Whether the child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely;
- Views of the Headteacher

### **Appeals – Reception to Year 6**

Parents whose application for a place at this school is unsuccessful may appeal to an independent appeal panel. As the law states that infant classes must be limited to a maximum of 30 children, this affects how an appeal is considered. An appeal for a reception class place can be upheld only in very limited circumstances. An appeal panel may only uphold an appeal where:

- (a) it finds that the admission of additional children would not breach the infant class size limit; or
- (b) it finds that the admissions arrangements did not comply with admissions law or were not correctly and impartially applied and the child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had complied or had been correctly and impartially applied; or
- (c) it decides that the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admissions authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

Appeals must be made in writing, setting out the reasons on which the appeal is made, and sent to the admissions appeals clerk, details of which will be on the School website, so that it is received by the date given in the letter confirming the decision not to offer a place. Parents/carers have the right to make oral representations to the appeal panel.

### **Appeals – Nursery**

There is no right of appeal against a decision not to offer a nursery place.

### **Application Process**

Beecholme Primary School follows the same application process and procedure as Merton School Admissions, details of which can be found here <https://www.merton.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools/admissions>

### **Late applications**

If you submit an application or change your existing preferences, or order of preferences, after the Local Authority's published closing date for admissions applications, without good reason for doing so, the whole application will be treated as late, and this may jeopardise the possibility of your child being offered a place at Beecholme Primary School. Applications which are late for no good reason will not be considered in the initial allocation round but will be allocated available places after all on time preferences have been processed, or added to the school's waiting list if no places exist. The Local Authority will accept late applications within the coordinated process only if they are late for a good reason. Each case is decided on its own merits.