



**Cabot**  
Learning  
Federation

Castle Primary  
School  
Admissions  
Policy 2026/2027

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Date Approved:  
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## **1 Policy Statement**

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to make clear the admissions process for Castle Primary School.
- 1.2 The CLF has agreed that the admission arrangements will remain in line with the agreed arrangements for Somerset Local Authority and the Secretary of State.

## **2 Equalities Impact Assessment**

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out. The assessment concluded that there was no adverse impact identified for any groups of people with protected characteristics / or / there was potential adverse impact identified for some groups of people with protected characteristics and mitigations are in place to reduce that impact. The full Equalities Impact Assessment Report can be obtained from [governance@clf.uk](mailto:governance@clf.uk).

## **3 Reference to other relevant policies**

- 3.1 Further information is available on the academy website.

## **4 Legislation or non-statutory guidance**

- 4.1 The Cabot Learning Federation (CLF) adheres to the statutory requirements and the principles outlined in the School Admission Code (DFE 2021), which all academies are required to adhere to via the Funding Agreement between Castle Primary School and the Secretary of State.

## **5 Roles and Responsibilities**

- 5.1 The 'admission authority' for the Academy is the Federation via its Board of Trustees
- 5.2 The Federation delegates its admission related functions to the Academy's Local Academy Council, who approve the Admission Policy
- 5.3 The Admission Committee formed of at least three Local Councillors consider in year admissions and requests for admission outside normal age range.
- 5.4 The Principal is responsible for the implementation and application of this policy.
- 5.5 Local Authority co-ordinates admissions in the normal admission round for all schools in the area.

## **6 Data Protection Implications**

- 6.1 Data collected during the admission process will be handled in accordance with the Trust Data Protection and Records Retention policies.

## **7 Introduction**

- 7.1 This Admission Policy is part of the admission arrangements for Castle Primacy School (Academy), which is part of Cabot Learning Federation (Federation), a multi academy trust.

- 7.2 The Academy is a co-educational publicly funded primary school welcoming applications for the admission of children regardless of ability, aptitude, special educational or other needs, disabilities or other protected characteristics.
- 7.3 The Academy admits children into Reception Year, who usually remain until Year 6.
- 7.4 The 'admission authority' for the Academy is the Federation via its Board of Trustees. The Federation delegates its admission related functions to the Academy's Local Governing Body, who in turn delegate to an Admission Committee formed of at least three Local Councillors.
- 7.5 This policy and all admission functions are carried out in compliance with admission law, the School Admissions Code 2021 and the School Admission Appeals Code 2022 (as revised by the Department for Education (DfE) from time to time), as well as other relevant laws such as the Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, and the law and statutory guidance relating to special educational needs.
- 7.6 In education law and this policy, a 'parent' is a natural or adoptive parent of a child (regardless of whether they have care of, contact with and/or parental responsibility for the child), as well as other persons who are not the natural or adoptive parent of the child but who have care of and/or parental responsibility for them.
- 7.7 In this policy, 'home Local Authority' refers to the Local Authority whose area the child's home address is located in.

## **8 Children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

- 8.1 Children with an EHCP are not admitted under this policy, they are admitted under separate statutory processes set out in the DfE's Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice. Their EHCPs are maintained by their home Local Authority, which is responsible for deciding which educational setting will be named in the EHCP as the one the child will attend.
- 8.2 Where the parents of a child with an EHCP want them to be educated at the Academy, they must discuss this with the SEN team at their home Local Authority. The home Local Authority may then consult the Academy on its suitability and compatibility, before deciding whether or not to name the Academy in the child's EHCP.
- 8.3 Where the Academy is named in an EHCP after consultation, it will admit the child. Where this happens in the 'normal admission round' (i.e. admission to Reception Year at the start of September), these places will be allocated within the PAN, reducing the number remaining for allocation under this policy. Where this happens at any other time, they will be admitted regardless of pupil numbers in that year group.

## **9 Age at Starting School and Compulsory School Age**

- 9.1 All children are entitled to a full-time place at school in the September following their fourth birthday. However, they do not reach compulsory school age (the age at which they are legally

required to attend school full-time) until one of three prescribed dates after their fifth birthday as set out below:

- 9.1.1 Children who turn 5 years old from 1 September to 31 December inclusive reach compulsory school age on 31 December.
- 9.1.2 Children who turn 5 years old from 1 January to 31 March inclusive reach compulsory school age on 31 March.
- 9.1.3 Children who turn 5 years old from 1 April to 31 August inclusive reach compulsory school age on 31 August. These children are known as 'summer born children'

## 10 Deferred Entry, Delayed Entry and Part-Time Attendance

- 10.1 Parents have a right to decide that their child will not start school until they reach compulsory school age. Where this is for one or two terms, this is known as 'deferring' entry, and the place offered and accepted will be retained for that child until they start school.
- 10.2 However, entry cannot be deferred beyond the end of the second term of the school year. The parents of summer born children can defer entry for one or two terms (and retain their place), however if they decide that do not want their child to start school until the following school year in September (known as 'delaying' entry), the place offered and accepted will be lost, and the parents will have to make a new application for admission the following year.
- 10.3 Parents also have a right to decide that their child will attend school part-time until they reach compulsory school age. Unlike with deferred entry, this may be for the whole school year (in the case of summer born children), and it can also be combined with the right to defer entry. For example:
  - 10.3.1 Children born on or before 1 September to 31 December can defer entry until the first day of school in January, or attend part-time until then.
  - 10.3.2 Children born on or before 1 January to 31 March can defer entry until the first day of school in January or April, or attend part-time until either of those dates, or a combination of the two can be arranged (e.g. defer until January, then attend part-time until April).
  - 10.3.3 Summer born children born on or before 1 April to 31 August can either:
    - (a) Defer entry until the first day of school in January or April, or attend part-time until either of those dates or for the whole school year, or a combination of the two can be arranged (e.g. defer until January or April, then attend part-time until April or the end of the school year); or
    - (b) Delay entry until September the following year, when the place offered and accepted will be lost and a new application for admission must be made the following year. This would normally be for admission to Year 1 with the child's normal age group, unless a Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group is made and agreed in principle for entry to Reception Year instead (see the separate section towards the end of this policy for further information in this respect).

10.3.4 In all cases, parents are asked to let the Academy know their decisions as soon as possible, to assist with operational planning.

## **11 Statutory Maximum Infant Class Size**

11.1 The statutory maximum infant class size for Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2 is 30 pupils per teacher.

11.2 Some categories of children may still be admitted over the statutory maximum. These categories are set out in regulations and summarised at Paragraph 2.15 of the Admissions Code. These additional pupils are 'excepted pupils' who do not count towards the class size until it falls back to 30.

## **12 Published Admission Number (PAN)**

12.1 The PAN for Reception Year is 25.

## **13 Oversubscription Criteria**

13.1 Where there are fewer applications than places available, all children will be offered a place. Where there are more applications than places available, places will be offered to children in the following categories in this order of priority:

### **13.1.1 Looked after and previously looked after children**

A 'looked after child' is one 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, in England. A 'previously looked after child' is one who was looked after in England, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements or special guardianship order, as well as a child who appears to the Admission Committee to have been in state care outside of England (i.e. in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole/main purpose is to benefit society), but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted.

Applications in this category may need to be supported by documentary evidence, such as a signed letter from the child's current or former Social Worker confirming their status, and/or an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order. In the case of children adopted from state care outside England, evidence of having been in state care outside England and of being adopted may be required, ideally accompanying the application. When considering the evidence provided, the DfE's published guidance will be followed.

Where the Virtual School Head (VSH) at the Local Authority has already verified the child's status and the Academy is able to confirm this with them, there will be no need for documentary evidence to be provided with the application.

### **13.1.2 Local children with a sibling at Castle Primary School at the time of application and admission**

The sibling must be on the roll in any year group at Castle Primary School at the time of application, and will still be on the roll when the applicant child starts at the Academy. For the avoidance of doubt, this means that siblings in Year 6 who will have left at the time the applicant child starts school will not meet this criteria.

A 'sibling' is a full brother or sister (sharing both parents), a half brother or sister (sharing one parent), an adopted brother or sister (sharing one or both parents), a foster brother or sister on a

long term placement (a looked after child), a step brother or sister (where one child's parent is married or in a civil partnership with the other child's parent) and a child of the applicant's parent's partner.

In all cases, the sibling must live at the applicant child's home address (as defined in this policy) as part of the same core family unit. For the avoidance of doubt, a child of an extended family member (e.g. cousin, grandchild), or the child of a friend, will not meet this criteria even if they live at the same address as the applicant child.

### **13.1.3 All other local children**

The applicant child's home address (as defined by this policy) must be situated within the Academy's Area of Prime Responsibility (catchment) which is shown on the Somerset Council catchment area map <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/applying-for-school/school-catchment/>

### **All other children**

All applicant children not included in any of the categories above will be allocated places in this category.

## **14 Tie Breaker**

- 14.1 In each of the oversubscription categories above, where there are more applications than places available, the order in which places are allocated will be determined by reference to the distance between the child's home address and the Academy, with those living closer receiving higher priority.
- 14.2 The distance from the child's home address to the Academy is measured in a straight line between the designated address point for the child's home and the designated central point within the main school building for the Academy, using Somerset Council computerised mapping system designed for this purpose.
- 14.3 Where two or more distances are equal (e.g. where they live in the same block of flats), the order in which places are allocated will be determined by random lottery, which will be performed in front of a person who is independent of the Academy.
- 14.4 In the case of twins, triplets or siblings of a higher multiple birth, where one or more of this sibling group achieve a place in the usual way, but the remaining sibling(s) do not, all of them will be offered a place even where this means exceeding the PAN or normal maximum pupil number for that year group. These children will be 'excepted pupils' in Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2 for the purpose of the statutory maximum infant class size rules.

## **15 Child's Home Address**

- 15.1 The child's home address is defined in this policy, and it is the address meeting this definition that must be stated in the application, and will be used when the application is processed.
- 15.2 The child's home address is the residential (not business) address at which they will live and sleep for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday night each week during term time, at the time of their admission. In the rare cases where the child lives with more than



one parent and their pattern of overnight stays with each is irregular from week to week, this should be established by considering the five term time weeks preceding the application.

- 15.3 Where any question arises over whether the stated child's home address is correct, parents will be asked to provide satisfactory documentary evidence to establish this. This may also be required for other children (e.g. siblings). Satisfactory documentary evidence may include family court orders setting out child arrangements and/or proof of ownership and renting, however other evidence will also be considered.
- 15.4 Where the family owns or rents another property, additional documentary evidence that the address stated in the application is the applicant child or sibling's permanent home address may be required
- 15.5 If the child/sibling moves address during the course of the application process, Somerset Council (and, if different, their home Local Authority) must be provided with satisfactory documentary evidence that the new address will meet the definition, as well as evidence of the expected moving date, as soon as possible

## 16 Application Process in the 'Normal Admission Round'

- 16.1 All local authorities are required to coordinate admission in the 'normal admission round' for all schools in their area.
- 16.2 The '**normal admission round**' includes all applications made for Reception Year in September which are made by the statutory deadline for such applications (**15 January 2026**), or made after this date but in time for the child's home Local Authority to offer a place by 'national offer day' (**16 April 2026 or the next working day**).
- 16.3 Applications in the 'normal admission round' for Reception Year must be made to the child's home Local Authority using their Common Application Form, which will be available on their website. For children resident in Somerset Council, the webpage can be accessed by clicking on this link: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/applying-for-school/>
- 16.4 Parents must carefully consider the oversubscription criteria above to check whether any additional forms or documentation should accompany the application for a particular category, as failing to do so could prevent the correct highest category being identified, which could result in a place not being offered.
- 16.5 A '**late application**' is one received before the first day of term but not in time for the Local Authority to offer a place on 'national offer day'. As these applications cannot be processed until after the first round of place allocations has happened, this is likely to adversely impact on the chances of achieving a place. Parents are therefore strongly encouraged to submit applications by the statutory deadline.

## 17 Application Process for In-Year Admission

- 17.1 An '**in-year application**' is one made for Reception Year on or after the first day of term in September, or for any other year group at any time.
- 17.2 The PANs set for **Reception Year** applies throughout the year of admission, but cease to apply at the end of that school year when the cohort moves to the next year group. This means that

in-year applications made for Reception Year may be refused on the basis that there are **no places available within the PAN**.

- 17.3 In respect of **all other year groups**, a place will be offered unless admitting an additional child would **prejudice the efficient provision of education, and/or the efficient use of resources**, at the Academy.
- 17.4 Where multiple in-year applications for the same year group are received and processed at the same time, and it is established that some but not all can be offered a place within the PAN/without causing prejudice, the oversubscription criteria and tie breaker set out above will be applied to determine which children will be offered the available places.
- 17.5 For an in-year application to Reception to Year 6, the application must be made directly to the Academy by completing the [In-Year Admission Application Form](https://www.castleprimaryschool.com/1089/admissions) which is available here: <https://www.castleprimaryschool.com/1089/admissions>. This form can be downloaded and printed out or obtained in hard copy format from the Academy's main office and then submitted to the Academy either to by email to [admissions@clf.uk](mailto:admissions@clf.uk) or by post/hand delivery to the Academy's main office marked for the attention of Nikki Oliver, Operations Manager.
- 17.6 Parents must carefully consider the oversubscription criteria above to check whether any additional forms or documentation should accompany the application for inclusion in a particular category, as failing to do so could prevent the correct highest category being identified, which could result in a place not being offered.
- 17.7 The outcome of in-year applications will be notified in writing to parents ideally within 10 school days, but in any event within a maximum of **15 school days** of receipt.

## **18 Requests for Admission Outside Normal Age Group**

- 18.1 Parents have a right to ask the admission authority for a school for its permission for their child to be admitted to a year group outside their normal age group (above or below). Parents do not, however, have an absolute right to decide this will happen. The request must be considered by the Admission Committee which will decide whether to agree it in principle, or refuse it, taking into account the factors set out below.
- 18.2 These requests are not applications for admission, which must still be made in the usual way. Parents are strongly encouraged to make these requests as early as possible, ideally well ahead of any deadlines for their normal age group, so that they make informed decisions as to preferences when they subsequently apply for admission. A request must be made to the 'admission authority' for each school for which admission outside normal age group is being sought, as the outcome may not be the same for all.
- 18.3 The Admission Committee makes decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned, taking into account the parents' views, the Principal's views, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, the child's medical history and the views of their medical professionals, whether they have previously been educated or attended nursery out of their normal age group, and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born

prematurely. This is not an exhaustive list, and parents may put forward any matters or documents for consideration.

- 18.4 Parents must complete a Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group Form. This form can be downloaded and printed out or obtained in hard copy format from the Academy's main office and then submitted to the Academy either by email to [admissions@clf.uk](mailto:admissions@clf.uk) or by post/hand delivery to the Academy's main office marked for the attention of the Admission Committee.
- 18.5 The Admission Committee will notify the parents of the outcome of their request in writing, and will explain its reasons in sufficient detail for them to understand why it came to that decision.
- 18.6 Where the request is agreed in principle in advance of an application being made, the letter should accompany the subsequent application. Parents should note that receiving agreement in principle to admission outside normal age group does not guarantee a subsequent offer of

a place, it simply opens the door for an application for that year group to be accepted and processed with all others received at the same time.

- 18.7 Parents do not have a statutory right of appeal against a refusal of a request for admission outside normal age group, however they may complain to the Academy about the outcome under its published Complaints Policy, if they wish.

## 19 Statutory Right of Appeal

- 19.1 Parents have a statutory right of appeal to an independent Admission Appeal Panel against the refusal of a place at the Academy. The refusal letter will set out full details of this right, including where the grounds of appeal must be sent and the deadline for doing so.
- 19.2 All appeals will be dealt with strictly in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code 2022 (as revised and republished from time to time).
- 19.3 The Academy will publish an admission appeal timetable for appeals against refusals in the 'normal admission round' on or before **28 February 2026**.

## 20 Waiting List

- 20.1 The Academy operates a waiting list for Reception Year only until 31 December following admission of the cohort. All names are then deleted, and parents will have to re-apply for a place if one is still sought.
- 20.2 The waiting list is ranked by reference to the oversubscription criteria above, and not by reference to the date that the child's name was added to the list. This means a child's name can go up, as well as down, the list as more names are added.
- 20.3 When a place becomes available, if there is more than one child in the highest category, the tie breaker will be used to determine which child will be offered the place.
- 20.4 Children allocated a place under their Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol (which all schools are required to participate in) will take precedence over children on the waiting list, and will be admitted regardless of pupil numbers in their year group.

## 21 Review and Determination of Admission Arrangements

- 21.1 The admission arrangements for every school must be determined every year for each successive intake. Where changes are proposed from the previous year (other than an increase in PAN), these must be consulted on for a minimum of 6 calendar weeks between 1 October and 31 January ahead of determination on or before 28 February in the determination year (as defined by the Code).
- 21.2 The admission arrangements for the 2026 intake were determined by the Admission Committee on [**•this date will be inserted after determination on or before 28 February 2025, ahead of publication on or before 15 March 2025**].