

Meppershall Church of England Academy

ADMISSIONS POLICY

YEAR OF ENTRY 2025 - 2026

Date adopted by Governors/ Academy	September 2024
Policy Status	Statutory
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This policy applies to all stakeholders on the Meppershall Academy site.

RECEPTION YEAR

INTRODUCTION

Meppershall School is a Church of England Academy within the Diocese of St Albans in Central Bedfordshire. The Governors will admit up to the planned admission number of 30 children to the reception year group in September at the beginning of each academic year.

The Local Authority (LA) operates a timetabled co-ordinated admissions procedure in line with government legislation. The LA will manage the process on behalf of the school according to the scheme published each year. The Governing Body, as the Admission Authority, will allocate the available places in line with this policy.

Meppershall Academy's has become a Split Site Primary school, with our Meppershall's Year 5 & 6 students being educated on the Henlow Academy site. They have the opportunity to transition into Henlow at Year 7 and continue their academic journey, taking their GCSEs and complete their Key Stage 4 education at Henlow Academy.

The LA operates an online application process details of which can be found at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/admissions. The closing date for either paper or online admission application forms to be received by the LA by the date indicated on the application form.

Please note that the information in this policy is correct for the year shown. Policies for future years may well be different.

HOW PLACES ARE OFFERED

Pupils who have an Educational Health & Care Plan (EHCP) are required to be admitted to the school which is named on the statement, even if the school is full. Pupils identified for admission through the Fair Access protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full. In the event of there being more applications than available places, the following oversubscription criteria will be applied, in order.

- Category 1 Looked after children or children who were previously 'looked after; but immediately after being 'looked after' became subject to an adoption, child arrangement or special guardianship order (see definition)
- Category 2 Other children who have a sibling who will be attending the school at the time of entry. (see definition)
- Category 3 Children who at the time of application have their home address within the ecclesiastical parish of Meppershall and will have a sibling attending the school at the time of entry. A map is available on the website www.achurchnearyou.com can be consulted to give the parish in which you reside).
- Category 4 Children of permanent staff
- Category 5 Children living outside the area as defined in Category 3, one or more of whose parents/guardians have, at the time of application, shown commitment to the Church of England or another Christian Church by attending a service at least once a month for the year prior to an application being made. Applicants in this category need to ask their priest or minister to complete the relevant section of the application form.
- Category 6 Children who are eligible for 'pupil premium' or 'service premium' funding
- Category 7 Very exceptional medical grounds. (See definition)
- Category 8 Any other children.

If applying these criteria results in there being more children with an equal right to admissions to the school than the number of available places, the tie break will be the distance the pupil lives from the school, measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's computerised mapping system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. The distance will be measured from the address point of the pupil's home to the main entrance door. Priority will not be given within each criterion to children who meet other criteria.

In the event of (a) two or more children living at the same address (e.g. children resident in a block of flats) or (b) two addresses measuring the same distance from the school, the decision will be made by random selection, using the School Admissions Team database to allocate the place.

DEFINITIONS

In respect of the following, the governors use the same definitions as the Local Authority (LA), set out in their Admissions Booklet.

- **Category 1 "Looked After Children" or children who were previously 'looked after'.**
- **Category 2 "Siblings attending Meppershall Academy"**
- **Categories 3 "Home Address"**
- **Category 4 "Children of permanent staff"**
- **Category 5 "Christian Church"**
- **Category 6 "Pupil Premium" or "Service Premium" funding**
- **Category 7 "Very exceptional Medical Grounds"**

Category 1 - Oversubscription criteria A 'looked after' child is a child who is (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989), or (c) any child adopted from state care abroad (IAPLAC)

Previously 'looked after' children

A previously 'looked after' child is one who immediately after being 'looked after' became subject to an adoption, child arrangement, or special guardianship order. An 'adoption order' is an order under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A 'residence order' is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 8 of the Children Act 1989. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).

Category 2 'Sibling'

A sibling refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, foster siblings where foster care has been arranged by a local authority or the child of the parent / carer's partner, and in every case, the child should be living at the same address. The sibling must be in the Academy at the time of application and be likely to remain in the Academy at the proposed date of admission.

Category 3 'Home Address'

The address given on the application form must be the child's permanent home address at the closing date for applications. If a child lives at more than one address because childcare arrangements are shared, the Governors will consider the address for admission purposes to be the one where the child lives for the majority of the time, unless the application is supported by a copy of a Court Order stating that a different address must be used for Academy admission applications.

Category 4

Staff who work at the Academy with a permanent contract, employed on either a full or part time basis. The member of staff must have been employed at the Academy for 2 or more years at the time the application for admission is made; or they must have been recruited for a post where there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

Category 5 “Christian Church”.

The governors define a ‘Christian’ Church to be one which is a member, or is eligible for membership, of Churches Together in England or the Evangelical Alliance.

Category 6 ‘Pupil Premium’ or ‘Service Premium’ children

The pupil premium is additional funding for publicly funded schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers.

Pupil premium funding is available to;

- Local authority maintained schools, including special schools and pupil referral units (PRUs)
- Voluntary-sector alternative provision (AP) with local authority agreement
- Special schools not maintained by the local authority (NMSS)
- Academies and free schools, including special and AP academies.

‘Service Premium’ children

State schools, Academies and Free Schools in England, which have children of service personnel in reception to Year 11, can receive service premium funding, which is designed to assist the school to provide mainly non-educational support (known as pastoral care) to these children.

If a child lives at two different addresses equally, the application must include a copy of any Court Order which states the address to be used for Academy admission purposes.

Where there is no such Court Order in place, parents should make a single joint application naming one address. Please note that applications submitted by separated parents will be subject to the same address verification checks as all other applications.

Category 7 Very Exceptional Medical Grounds

Meppershall Academy will consider your application on medical grounds where there are ‘very exceptional’ medical reasons which make it essential for your child to attend a particular school and where the preferred school is the only school locally that could meet your child’s needs.

You will need to submit a medical report from your child's doctor or consultant, setting out valid medical reasons why it is essential for your child to be admitted to the school in question and the difficulties that would be caused if your child has to attend another school.

UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS.

Appeals.

Parents who have not been allocated a place for their child in the reception class have the right of appeal to an independent panel. The LA will explain the procedure to you if this situation arises.

Waiting list.

Where it is not possible to allocate all applications for the school, a waiting list will be kept. The waiting list is organised in the priority of the school's admissions criteria. It is not based on the date the application was added to the list. The waiting list will be held until 31st July in the academic year of when admission is required.

IN YEAR ADMISSIONS

Requests for admissions into other year groups should be made on the In-Year application form to the Local Authority. The form is available from the Local Authority and can also be downloaded from the Local Authority website.

DELAYED ADMISSION FOR SUMMER BORN CHILDREN

Parents have the right to request their summer born child's admission to Reception Year is in the September following their fifth birthday. However, parents/carers do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group, a decision will be made by the academy trust in consultation with the Head of School.

Parents/carers need to make their request in writing, separately from the CAF, directly to the Academy Trust via the Head of School. The request should include the parents/carers reasons for the request, information regarding the child's academic, social and emotional development including any supporting evidence the parent deems relevant; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional and if applicable,

details if the child was born prematurely including whether they would have been in a lower age group had they been born on their due date.

The academy trust, along with the Head of School, will then consider the request, making their decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child in accordance with the School Admissions Code. Once determined, the decision will be communicated by the academy to the parent(s)/carer(s) in writing and will include the reasons for the decision.

If a request is granted, the parent will need to make an application as part of next year's normal admission round and this will be processed within the normal allocation process.

A place is never guaranteed at the academy and in the case of oversubscription, places are offered in accordance with the academy's oversubscription criteria. In short it would be delaying the application rather than an offer of a place.

*A summer born child is one born between 1 April to 31 August.