



# The Levels Academy Trust

**Raising Aspirations, Realising Potential TOGETHER**

## **The Joint Admissions Policy for The Levels Academy Trust**

**2020-2021**

The schools that form The Levels Academy Trust and as such the local governing body of each school are the admissions authority.

All applications for admission, and any supplementary information forms, must be submitted to your home local authority by the closing date 15 January 2020, and will be considered under the Equal Preference with ranking system of allocation. The LA will forward all applications to the Academy Trust schools and the governing bodies will rank them against the oversubscription criteria set out below. This list will then be returned to the LA under the co-ordinated admissions scheme and they will make a single offer of a place on 16 April 2020.

The following four schools form part of the ACADEMY TRUST, and as such each of the governing bodies form part of the Academies admission authority.

- Middlezoy Primary, Church Road, Middlezoy TA7 0NX.  
[office@middlezoy.somerset.sch.uk](mailto:office@middlezoy.somerset.sch.uk) Tel: 01823698465. Admission Number for reception 2020 intake: 15
- Othery Primary, Othery TA7 0PX. [office@otheryvillage.somerset.sch.uk](mailto:office@otheryvillage.somerset.sch.uk) Tel: 01823698464. Admission number for reception 2020 intake: 15
- Huish Episcopi Primary, North Street, Langport TA10 9RW.  
[office@huishepiscopi-pri.somerset.sch.uk](mailto:office@huishepiscopi-pri.somerset.sch.uk) Tel: 01458250673. Admission number for reception 2020 intake: 25
- Hambridge Primary, Hambridge, Langport. TA10 0AZ.  
[office@hambridge.somerset.sch.uk](mailto:office@hambridge.somerset.sch.uk) Tel: 01460281370. Admission number for reception 2020 intake: 20

## **THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

### **Cyclical admissions**

For admissions to one of the above Academy Trust schools for a reception year place in September 2020 applications need to be made to the local authority in which the child lives. Application forms can be obtained from one of the Academy Trust school offices, by request to the Local Authority or can be downloaded from, [www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions).

Applicants can express a preference for up to 3 schools. In the event of over-subscription at the September point of entry, applications will be ranked against each school using the Academy Trusts over-subscription criteria and will be offered their highest accepted preference. The over-subscription criteria for the Trust is laid out below.

For September 2020 admission to one of the Trust schools, applications and any supplementary information forms, must be submitted to your home Local Authority by midnight on the 15 January 2020.

If a child has been offered a place at one of the lower preference schools they will be added to the waiting list of the higher preference schools.

Parents/carers have the right to appeal for a place at any school which they have been refused a place at. Information on how to appeal is detailed under the heading of appeals.

### **In-Year admissions**

For all admissions to one of the Academy Trust schools, except cyclical admissions as stated above, applications will be made directly to the Academy Trust school where a place is required.

Admission application forms will be available from the applicable Academy Trust school.

Decisions for in year places will be made within 5 school days. Applications made during the school holidays will not be considered until the schools are back in session.

In the event of over-subscription applications will be ranked against the following over-subscription criteria set for the Academy Trust.

If an application is not successful the child will be added to the waiting list which is ranked according to the over-subscription criteria set out below.

Parent/Carers will be notified by first class post of the decision and the reasons for that decision.

## **Oversubscription criteria**

In line with the School Admissions Code the method used for allocating places will be Equal Preference with Ranking. (For a full description see below).

The Academy Trust schools will be required to admit a child with a statement of Special Education Needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) if the statement/EHCP names one of the Academy Trust schools before the following criteria is applied.

1. Looked after Children (children in care of a local authority) and previously looked after children but ceased to be so because they were adopted, subject to a residence order or special guardianship order.
2. Children without a Statement of Special Education Needs whose school placement has been identified by a multi-agency professional team. (see important note 1)
3. Children living in the catchment area of one of the trust schools that a place has been applied for and with an older sibling at the school at the time of admission, and who lives at the same address.
4. Children living in the catchment area of the trust school, that has been applied for.
5. Children living outside the catchment area of the trust school that they have applied for but with an older sibling on roll at the school at the time of admission.
6. Children living outside the catchment area of the trust school that they have applied for, but nearest to the school by straight line measurement.

## **Important Notes:**

- 1) Will provide priority for admission of non-statemented pupils to one of the Trust schools, provided that the appropriate multi-professional teams identify that school as the one the child must attend.
- 2) In the event of the admission number being reached within the over subscription criteria the following will apply:
  - For all children whose home is in the catchment area: priority will be given to those who have a longer (straight line measurement using the computerised Geographical Information System (GIS). journey to an alternative school.
  - For children whose home is outside the catchment area: priority will be given to those living nearest their Trust school (straight line measurement using the computerised Geographical Information System (GIS).
- 3) A copy of the Academy Trust schools catchment area is available to view at the applicable school office and can also be made available upon request from the Local Authority.

## **Admission of pupils outside of their chronological year group**

Schools are required to provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Children must legally be accessing full-time education from the start of the term after they turn five.

A parent/carer may request for their child to be admitted outside of their chronological year group. In Somerset this is referred to as applying to start school early or late.

All applications will be considered by the local governing body of each school in conjunction with the Headteacher and decisions made on the basis of the circumstances of each case

### Points to consider;

- A holistic view needs to be used, taking into account the pupil's social, emotional and physical development and needs and whether this may cause them to be at a different level from their peer group.
- A school should be able to meet an individual pupil's needs including Special Educational Needs. In Somerset, children and young people in mainstream schools get intensive support early, through support service involvement and if necessary, individually targeted resources. It may be deemed necessary for a pupil to have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP).
- Similarly a school should be able to meet the needs of gifted and talented children and each school has a Gifted and Talented co-ordinator / Leading Teacher, who is a teacher with particular expertise in dealing with the most able children.
- The responsibility for addressing individual needs lies with the school through an appropriately differentiated curriculum and personalised learning.
- Pupils are seldom uniformly delayed in their intellectual development. If a pupil is put into a younger age group and a reduced set of general expectations are in place, then areas of strength are at risk of not receiving appropriate stimulation.
- As he or she matures the child may realise that the rest of the class/group are of a different age, causing adverse emotional impact.
- It is very important to consider the possible negative impact on a pupil of being placed in a year group below that of his/her chronological age.
- A pupil arriving from outside of the United Kingdom with little or poor English would not normally be sufficient reason for a retention. However, it may be appropriate to take into account if a pupil is in a certain year group (eg Year 11).

### **Possible Implications of Retention or Acceleration**

The decision to request retention or acceleration should be very carefully considered as it can have long term implications. Parent/Carers and the local governing body should consider the following;

- If it is agreed that a pupil can be retained or accelerated there is no guarantee that the school they transfer to or move to in the case of an in year admission will also agree to this. The pupil could then be placed back in the chronological age group causing them to miss or repeat a year.
- It would be difficult for a retained pupil to be put back in their chronological age group due to having to catch up on work, make new friends etc but if a pupil continues to be educated outside of their chronological year group their physical, social and emotional needs may not be fully met.
- A pupil who has been retained could choose to leave school at the end of year 10 and not complete his/her GCSE's.
- Some pupils who move on to a college of further education may lose a year of their 16-19 entitlement if they enrol at college a year later than their peers.
- If a pupil is delayed, there is no entitlement to school transport when they enter Year 11, as they are no longer of statutory school age.

### **Who is responsible for making a decision?**

The local governing body of The Academy Trust in conjunction with the Head of School/Executive Principal is responsible for making the decision whether to retain or accelerate a pupil.

Factors that influence decision making may include;

- Information about the pupil's academic, social, physical and emotional development.
- Whether they have previously been educated outside their chronological age group.
- In the case of children born prematurely, it will include taking account of whether they would naturally have fallen into the lower age group if born at the expected time.
- Whether the pupil has a medical need that has caused them to miss a large amount of school at a time which will have a significant impact?
- The Academy Trust will take account of the views of the headteacher/pre-school provider and other staff members (eg class teacher, Senco) of the school or Pre-school concerned and where relevant the views of other professionals involved with the pupil.

### **The process for requesting such an admission**

The process for requesting such an admission is as follows;

- The parent/carer is required to make an application for their child's normal age group but can submit a request for admission out of the normal age group at the same time.
- The parent/carer is required to submit a request for admission out of the normal age group and attach supporting evidence as necessary. The local governing body have the right to request further evidence that may be required.
- The local governing body will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.
- The local governing body will write to the parent with the outcome and set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

- If their request is agreed, their application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered.
- Where a parent's request is agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year.
- One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all

## **How To Apply**

### **Children Starting or Transferring School**

All applications for retention or acceleration for a year in which a child is due to start or transfer school (the year of entry) **must** be made directly to the Local Authority who are responsible for co-ordinating this process. The Local Authority will then pass the information onto the Academy Trust.

An on-time application must be made and submitted along with an acceleration/retention application form. It is important that an on-time application is made as if the request for your child to be retained is unsuccessful it may then not be possible to secure a preferred school place.

#### **Important note;**

If an acceleration or retention is agreed this has only been agreed specifically for the school for which the parent has expressed a preference.

School place applications will be considered against the Published Admission Number and the over-subscription criteria will be applied should the school have more applications than there are places available. **Should the school place application be unsuccessful there is no guarantee that a school place can be offered at another school in the same year group.**

Therefore it would be recommended that parents consider choosing their catchment school when applying for a retention or acceleration. This still does not guarantee a place but does provide a priority in most cases.

### **Applications for retention or acceleration for a child within the school they already attend**

Application should be discussed directly with the school in the first instance. The Academy Trust is responsible for making this decision and informing the Local Authority if it is agreed.

If a parent is unsuccessful in gaining a place at a school they have the right of appeal but only if it is not possible to offer the child a place in another year group at the school.

Decisions will be communicated in writing by the Academy Trust setting out clearly the reasons for the decision to ensure transparency in the decision making process.



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## **Retention Application Form**

Please complete this form if you would like your child to be retained (educated in a year group behind his or her chronological year group). You may attach any pre-school or school reports, medical information, psychological reports or any other information you feel is relevant that you would like the admission authority to consider.

**Please note for children due to start school for the first time or transfer to the next phase of education;** an on-time application must be made and submitted along with the retention application form. For further information on making a Starting or Transferring School application, please visit Somerset County website [www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/admissions) and choose the page, Apply to Start School or Apply to Transfer School. A parent who chooses not to send their summer born child (April 1<sup>st</sup> – August 31<sup>st</sup>) to school until they have reached compulsory school age may request that they are admitted outside their age group – to reception rather than year 1.

Before filling out this form please read the attached guidance notes. If you have any questions please call 0300 1232224.

The Academy Trust in conjunction with the Head of School/Executive Principal of the preferred school will make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case.



## Retention Application Form

<b>Child's Full Name</b>	
<b>Date of Birth</b>	
<b>If your child was born prematurely what was the due date</b>  <b>Proof may be requested</b>	
<b>Parent/Guardian Details</b>	
<b>Home Address</b>	
<b>Tel Number</b>	
<b>Child's Current Pre School/School</b>  <b>Address</b>	
<b>School where placement is required.</b>	

**Reasons for Retention**

**Please give a level of detail that will enable the Academy Trust to make a decision on your request, please continue on a separate page if needed**

**In summary please give your reasons why you want your child to be retained.**

A large empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to provide a summary of reasons for retention.

**Please give any information about your child's social development which would support your request for a retention.**

**Please give any information about your child's physical development which would support your request for a retention.**

**Please give any information about your child's emotional development which would support your request for a retention.**

**Please give any information about any medical conditions which would support your request for a retention.**

**Views of other professionals**

Please list any professionals including your child's current pre-school or school provision that you have consulted with who agree that your child should be retained and attach any signed letters of support or any reports from them that will support your case.

**Name and contact details**

**Position/profession**

**Details of involvement**

**Name and contact details**

**Position/profession**

**Details of involvement**

<b>Name and contact details</b>
<b>Position/profession</b>
<b>Details of involvement</b>

I understand that in signing this form I am requesting that my child is retained.

Signed.....Date.....

Please Print Name.....Relationship to child.....

**Please return this form to:**

**Admissions and Entitlements Team, PPC402C, County Hall, Taunton, TA1 4D or e-mail to:schooladmissions@somerset.gov.uk**

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

### **Siblings**

For the purpose of admissions, a sibling is defined as a child living at the same address as a half-brother or sister, an adoptive brother or sister or children of the same household.

### **Multiple birth applications (for example Twins)**

In the case of multiple birth applications, the published admission number will be increased at the point of allocation to ensure multiple birth siblings can be allocated places at the same school. (Sibling definition applies)

### **Parent or Parent/Carer**

Natural parents, whether they are married or not, any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person. Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or a young person ( having a child or young person means that a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child is considered to be a parent in education law).

### **Home Address**

The home address is important as the school places are allocated on the basis of the home address of each child. A child's home address is considered to be where the child spends the majority of their time with the person(s) who care for the child.

Documentary evidence of the ownership or rental agreement may be required, together with proof of actual permanent residence to the property concerned. Places cannot be allocated on the basis of intended future changes of address unless house moves have been confirmed through the exchange of contracts or the signing of a formal lease agreement. The Admission authority reserves the right to seek further documentary evidence to support your claim to residency.

Please note that the Admissions authority is unable to allocate a place to anyone moving into the county from abroad prior to their arrival in the country. We would then require proof of residency as stated above. The only exceptions are children of Service personnel and other crown servants (including Diplomats).

It should also be noted that an address used for child care arrangements cannot be used as a home address for the purpose of applying for a school place. A Fraudulent claim to an address may lead to the withdrawal of the offer place.

You must notify the Trust school or the Schools Admission team at County Hall Taunton of any change of address during the admissions procedure. The Trust



school must be informed if there is any change of address during an in-year admission application.

### **Distance Measuring**

For the purpose of measuring home to the applied Trust school distance, all calculations will be straight- line measurements from the address point of the home to the address point of the trust school being applied for, using the LA's GIS mapping system.

### **Equal Preference with Ranking allocation method**

All applications for a place in one of the Trust schools will be ranked against the published over-subscription criteria for the school concerned and where schools are oversubscribed, places will be allocated up to the published admission number in strict priority order for that school.

### **Waiting List**

Where an application has been refused, the child will be put on a waiting list. This will be kept on order of over-subscription criteria by the Trust school governing body and will be maintained until the end of the academic year to which the application applies.

### **In year admissions**

All requests for school places should be made to the school office of the trust school which a place is required.

All in-year applications will be considered against the same over-subscription criteria as for new intakes.

### **Statutory School Age**

Children may start school in the September following their fourth birthday however, legally: a child must be receiving full time education at the start of the term following their fifth birthday.

### **Deferred Entry**

Where a trust school offers places in reception classes before the child is of compulsory school age the parents of that child will be offered the option of deferring their child's entry until later in the school year if they are summer born. Where a parent chooses to defer entry, their child will always join their chronological year group.

### **Phased/Staggered Entry**

The Academy Trust offer full-time school places but with the agreement of parents operate a Phased or Staggered Entry in the first instance to help children settle smoothly into school. All children should start school within the first ten days of term, but may attend on a part time basis until the autumn half term. Each school will determine the nature of the settling in period depending on the number and make-up of the cohort. Parents should discuss their individual child's needs as part of the school's induction process.

### **School Transport**

School transport provision will be organised by Transporting Somerset.

Subsidised school transport may be awarded to pupils providing a school place has been secured for whom transport is required.

Any pupil attending one of the Trust schools and is in the catchment of that school and is living more than three miles away (two miles if under eight years of age). The first two miles will follow the shortest available walking route that is safe to walk for a child accompanied as necessary, the remaining distance will follow the shortest available driven route to school. The method of measurement will be by the use of GIS mapping software.

### **Children of UK service personnel or crown agents**

Applications can be considered in advance of moving into an area, if accompanied by an official government letter which declares a relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering area address. The application will still be measured against the over subscription criteria.

### **Appeals**

Every child who has not been offered a place will be sent details of how to lodge an appeal and the timetable of appeals. Parents have a legal right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel.

The Trust appeals time table will be published on each of the Trust schools web site by the 28 February each year.

The deadline for lodging appeals is 20 school days from the date of notification. Appeals hearings will be heard within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged. Additional evidence must be submitted within 10 school days of lodging an appeal. Appellants will be given at least 10 school days' notice of the appeal hearing arrangements. Appellants will not be able to submit any new evidence relating to their appeal on the day of the hearing. Decision letters will be sent by first class post within 5 school days of the hearing.

Appellants do not have the right to a second appeal for admission in the same academic year or if they have been offered a place in another year group.

Appellants may wish to complain to the Local Government Ombudsmen if they feel the appeals procedure has not been carried out properly. Information about the arrangements for making a complaint will be included with the decision letter when sent to the appellant.



Appellants do not have the right to a second appeal for admission in the same academic year or if they have been offered a place in another year group.

Appellants may wish to complain to the Local Government Ombudsmen if they feel the appeals procedure has not been carried out properly. Information about the arrangements for making a complaint will be included with the decision letter when sent to the appellant.

Signed  ..... Mr Gary Piper - Chair of Trustees

Dated 30-3-2020 .....

