



# Grace Academy

## Admissions Policy

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## 1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain **how to apply** for a place at Grace Academy Coventry, Grace Academy Solihull and Grace Academy Darlaston
- Set out the trust’s **arrangements for allocating places to the pupils** who apply to these academies
- Explain **how to appeal** against a decision not to offer your child a place

## 2. Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on the following advice from the Department for Education (DfE):

- [School Admissions Code](#)
- [School Admission Appeals Code](#)

As an academy, the school is required by its funding agreement to comply with these codes, and with the law relating to admissions as set out in the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#). This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. Definitions

The **normal admissions round** is the period during which parents can apply for state-funded school places at the school's normal point of entry, using the common application form provided by their home local authority.

**Looked after children** are children who, at the time of making an application to a school, are:

- In the care of a local authority, or
- Being provided with accommodation by a local authority in exercise of its social services functions

**Previously looked after children** are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they:

- Were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 or the Adoption and Children Act 2002, or
- Became subject to a child arrangements order, or
- Became subject to a special guardianship order

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.

## 4. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by your home local authority (regardless of which local authority the schools are in). You can use this form to express your preference for a minimum of 3 state-funded schools, in rank order. You will receive an offer for a school place directly from your local authority.

## 5. Requests for admission outside the normal age group

Parents are entitled to request a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In accordance with the School Admissions Code, this will include taking account of:

- Parents' views
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional
- Whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely

- The principal's views.

Wherever possible, requests for admission outside a child's normal age group will be processed as part of the main admissions round. They will be considered on the basis of the admission arrangements laid out in this policy, including the oversubscription criteria listed in appendix A, B or C. Applications will not be treated as a lower priority if parents have made a request for a child to be admitted outside the normal age group.

Parents will always be informed of the reasons for any decision on the year group a child should be admitted to. Parents do not have a right to appeal if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

## 6. Allocation of places

### 6.1 Admission number

The school has the following agreed admission numbers for pupils for entry in Year 7:

- Grace Academy Coventry 170
- Grace Academy Darlaston 150
- Grace Academy Solihull 180.

Arrangements for admission to Year 12 are set out in appendix A, B or C in this policy,

### 6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose statement of special educational needs (SEN) or education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants will be offered a place.

In the event that the school receives more applications than the number of places it has available, places will be given to those children who meet any of the criteria set out in appendix A for Grace Academy Coventry, B for Grace Academy Solihull and C for Grace Academy Darlaston, in order until all places are filled.

### 6.3 Tie break

In the case of 2 or more applications that cannot be separated by the oversubscription criteria outlined above, the school will use random allocation as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. This process will be independently verified.

## 7. In-year admissions

You can apply for a place for your child at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose statement of SEN or EHC plan names the school will be admitted.

Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for (as agreed by the local authority), your child will be offered a place.

If there are no spaces available at the time of your application, your child's name will be added to a waiting list for the relevant year group. When a space becomes available it will be filled by one of the pupils on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in appendix A, B or C of this policy. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

Applications for in-year admissions should be submitted as set out in appendix A, B or C or directly to the relevant academy.

## 8. Appeals

Parents will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision in relation to the offering of a place for a student to Grace Academy. The Appeal Panel will be independent of the Academy and will be composed of three members who will include:

- At least one person who has no personal experience of Grace Academy defined as a 'lay member'.
- At least one person with experience in education.

The arrangements for appeals will be in line with the Code of Practice on Academy Admission Appeals published by the Department of Education as it applies to academies.

Parents will normally have 14 days (10 working days) after notification of a place not being offered at Grace Academy to lodge an appeal. The notification will indicate the reasons for refusal of a place and of the right of appeal.

Parents wishing to appeal against an admission decision by Grace Academy should send a completed appeal form to the Clerk to the Appeal Panel at the address given on the appeal form. Other documents may be submitted in support of an appeal and should be lodged with the Clerk to the Appeal Panel not less than 7 days before the appeal hearing.

Parents will be given 14 days (10 working days) notice of the appeal hearing, unless they agree to a shorter period of notice. At least 7 days before the hearing Grace Academy will provide the parent with a written statement detailing the reasons why it has not been possible to allow the student to attend Grace Academy. The Appeal panel will have the discretion to refuse to admit late evidence.

The Clerk to the Appeal Panel will, if possible, inform parents of the Appeal Panel's decision on the day of the hearing. In the case of the appeal hearings taking in excess of one day the Clerk to the Appeal Panel will contact parents with the decision on the final day of the hearings. The parents will also be informed of the outcome in writing within 14 days (10 working days) of the date of the hearing. In the case of unsuccessful appeals the Appeal Panel will give the parents their reasons for not upholding the appeal.

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the board of trustees every year.

Whenever changes to admission arrangements are proposed (except where the change is an increase to the agreed admission number), the trust will publicly consult on these changes.

## Appendix A – Grace Academy Coventry

### 1. Oversubscription Criteria:

If there are more requests than there are places available within the Academies admission number, places will be allocated in accordance with the following criteria and in the order shown below:

- a) Children who, at the time of admission, are in the care of a local authority or are provided with accommodation by the authority (looked after children). Also children who were previously looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order, residence order or a special guardianship order. A looked-after child is defined in Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.
- b) Children who live in the catchment area served by the Academy, who have a brother or sister attending the Academy provided that the brother or sister is of compulsory Academy age and will continue to attend that Academy the following year. The definition of brother or sister includes step-brothers, step-sisters, half-brothers, half-sisters and adopted brothers and sisters living at the same permanent address.
- c) Other children who live in the catchment area served by the Academy.
- d) Children living outside the catchment area with a brother or sister who currently attends the Academy, provided that the brother or sister is of compulsory Academy age and will continue to attend that Academy the following year
- e) Children by reference to the distance to the preferred Academy. If it is not possible to meet all of the requests in any one of the categories described above, the City Council will prioritise the requests by reference to distance.

#### Brothers and Sisters

The City Council sees the benefits of children from the same family attending the same Academy and gives priority to brother and / or sister connections in its policy for allocating places. The definition of brother or sister includes step-brothers, step-sisters, half-brothers, half-sisters and adopted brothers and sisters living at the same permanent address. However, where the Academy is over-subscribed no guarantee can be given that places will be available for brothers and sisters. Where the final place in a year group is offered to one of twins or other multiple births the parent has to decide which child will take up the place.

#### Compulsory Academy age

Brothers and sisters are required to be of compulsory Academy age within the oversubscription criteria. This means they must be attending in Years 7 to 11 at the time that the applicant would be joining the Academy.

#### Distance

If it is not possible to meet all of the requests in any one of the categories described above, the City Council will prioritise the requests within that category by reference to distance. A straight-line

measurement will be made, using a computerised mapping system, from the centre of the child's residence - to the centre of the preferred Academy site. The address used must be the child's permanent home address. The shortest measurement will have the highest priority. Where the final place in a year group can be taken by two or more children living an equal distance from the Academy, the Academy Governing Board made up of independent individuals will select by drawing lots.

### **Home address**

A pupil's home address is considered to be a residential property that is the child's only or main residence. At the time places are allocated, proof of permanent residence at the property concerned may be required. Where documentary evidence can substantiate to the satisfaction of the Local Authority that care is split equally between parents at two homes, parents must name the address to be used for the purpose of allocating a place.

**If a place at the Academy is offered on the basis of an address that is subsequently found to be different from a child's normal and permanent home address, then that place is liable to withdrawal.**

Children of UK service personnel and other Crown Servants will be treated as meeting the residency criteria for a catchment area once proof of posting has been provided.

### **Catchment area**

One of the aims of the Academy is to serve its neighbourhood and develop links with the local community to strengthen the Academy and the community. The area served by an Academy is known as the catchment area.

### **Late Applications**

All applications received up to and including 31 October 2019 will be treated as on time. Applications received after this date due to a house move will be treated as on time up to 31 December 2019. All other applications received after 31 October 2019 will be considered to be late and may not be processed until after 1 March 2020.

### **Operation of Waiting Lists**

Subject to provisions regarding waiting lists the Local Authority's co-ordinated admissions scheme, the Academy will operate a waiting list for each year group. Where in any year Grace Academy Coventry receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate until 31<sup>st</sup> December. This will be maintained by Grace Academy Coventry and it will be open to any parent to ask for his or her child's name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription set out in paragraph 1 (clauses a to e) above. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

## Applications for Sixth Form

The Sixth Form admission number is 140. The criteria for admission is as follows:

For level 3 qualifications:

- At least 5 GCSEs A\*-C or equivalent GCSE. (A grade B may be required to study certain subjects);
- GCSE English and Maths will be required for certain subjects and/or qualifications;

For level 2 qualifications:

- qualifications appropriate to the course/s to be studied.

All entry requirements are discussed with potential applicants at interview.

Whatever the level of ability, all students are expected to show a commitment towards studying, an enthusiasm for success and a willingness to follow the dress code.

## Appendix B - Grace Academy Solihull

Chapelhouse Road, Chelmsley Wood, Birmingham, B37 5JS

### Admission arrangements

Applications for Academy admission will be managed by Solihull Council in accordance with the Local Authority's coordinated scheme for admission.

The Academy's admission number is 180. Where the number of applications is lower than the Academy's admission number, all applicants will be admitted. If there are more applications than places available then all applications will be considered, together and at one time by a committee of the Governing Body. Places will be offered in priority order according to the oversubscription criteria.

### Oversubscription criteria

- Priority 1**      (a) Looked after children and previously looked after children who are now adopted  
                      (b) Children whose exceptional circumstances can only be met at this Academy
- Priority 2**      Children who normally live in the Academy's catchment area
- Priority 3**      Children who have an older brother or sister at the Academy at the same time
- Priority 4**      Children living closest to the Academy, measured in a straight line from the child's home

### Notes:

1. Children with a statement of special educational needs that names Grace Academy will be offered a place first. This will reduce the number of places available.
2. Applications with exceptional social or medical reasons must be supported by independent professional evidence. The Council's Cabinet Member Advisory Group for Admissions will consider applications and evidence and make recommendations to Cabinet Member, who will grant priority 1b to applications with exceptional circumstances.
3. The catchment area can be seen on the Council's website: [www.solihull.gov.uk/online maps](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/online maps).
4. If there are more children wanting places in priority 2 than there are places available, places will be offered to children living in the catchment area in the following order:  
  
Priority 2a Children who have an older brother or sister at the Academy at the same time.  
Priority 2b Children living nearest the Academy, measured in a straight line from home to Academy.

5. Children who have applied for their catchment-area Academy, but could not be given a place, will be given priority 2 if they have expressed a preference for this Academy.
6. The home address is the place where the child is permanently resident with his or her parents. When a child lives between two addresses, the address used for offering an Academy place will be where the child lives for most of the Academy week (Monday to Friday). If care is split equally, parents can choose which address will be used. If the child moves into the home of a friend or relative during the process or the change of address appears to be a deliberate device to improve the child's priority, the address will not be used.
7. The places that are offered are provisional offers and are dependent upon the circumstances of the application remaining unchanged at the date of admission to the Academy. It is important that parents provide the Academy or Solihull Council with any information relating to changes in circumstances, such as a change of address, as soon as they occur. Offers based on fraudulent, in correct or misleading information will be withdrawn if the child is no longer entitled to the place because there are children on the waiting list with a higher priority. In these circumstances the place will be withdrawn after the child has started the Academy, in line with the Admissions Code.
8. Under priority 3 a brother or sister must live at the same address and could be:
  - A brother or sister sharing the same parents;
  - a half-brother or half-sister, where two children share one parent; a stepbrother or stepsister, where two children are related by a parent's marriage or civil partnership (a formal arrangement that gives same-sex couples the same legal status as married couples);
  - the separate children of a couple who live together; or
  - an adopted or fostered brother or sister.
9. If offering places within priority 3 would cause the Academy's admission number to be exceeded, then children living closest to the Academy will be offered first.
10. In any priority, if two or more applicants have the same distance but only one place can be offered, a computerised random allocation system will be used to decide which applicant has the highest priority. The applicant with the lowest random number will have the highest priority.
11. Distances are measured by the Local Authority's computerised admissions system. The admissions system uses six-figure grid references provided by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG). The grid references provide a unique point on each property.
12. Waiting lists are produced in strict order of priority, against the over-subscription criteria and are managed by the Local Authority. Waiting lists for Year 7 intake are kept until the end of the autumn term. After this a Local Authority change of Academy application form will need to be completed.
13. Applications or changes to your application received after the closing date and before the Governors' admissions meeting are late and will be considered if possible. Applications

received after the Governors' decision meeting are late and will be considered after applications with the same priority that were received on time.

14. If possible places will be offered at the same Academy to twins, triplets and children from other multiples births. If only one place can be offered the parent will choose which child should have the place.
15. Applications for an Academy place at any time other than the normal time for admission (in-year admission) should be made to parents' home council for processing. If there is a vacancy in the relevant year group a place will be offered. If the year group is full the governing body will apply the admission criteria to the application so that it can be placed on the waiting list.
16. The Governing Body recognises its duty to comply with the Local Authority Fair Access Protocol to provide fair access to school for pupils who need an Academy place because they have missed, or are at risk of missing, education.
17. Parents who wish to appeal against the decision of the Governors to refuse their child a place in the school may apply in writing to the Chair of Governors. Appeals will be heard by an independent panel.

### **Applications for Sixth Form**

The Sixth form admission number is 140. The criteria for admission is as follows:

#### **Level 3 qualifications**

Academic (A Level):

- At least 2 B grades or grade 6's at GCSE
- A further 3 C grades or above.
- At least grade 5 in English and Maths
- Any other specific grade needed for individual courses for above

Vocational (e.g. BTEC):

- At least 2 B grades (one of these must be in Science for engineering courses) or grade 6's at GCSE
- A further 3 C grades or above or grade 4's at GCSE
- At least grade 4 at English or Maths

## Appendix C – Grace Academy Darlaston

### Oversubscription Criteria:

If there are more applications than there are places available, places will be allocated using the Oversubscription Criteria in the following order of priority:

1. Children in Public Care (looked after children). (see note 1)
2. Pupils who have a sibling already in attendance at the Academy when the application is made and who will be still attending the Academy at the proposed admission date. (see note 2)
3. Pupils for whom a place at the Academy is essential on medical or social grounds as supported in writing by a medical practitioner or a social worker. (Applications will be subject to verification by Walsall Children’s Services). (see note 3).
4. Distance between the home address and the Academy as measured in a straight line with those living closer to the Academy receiving the higher priority. (see note 6)

If there is oversubscription in criteria 2 to 4, priority will be given to those living closest to the Academy as measured in a straight line.

### Explanatory notes for Oversubscription Criteria

#### 1. Children in Public Care (looked after children)

Children who are in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by a local authority and previously looked after children who ceased to be because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order.

#### 2. Sibling

A sibling is a child who resides at the same address as the child for whom a place is being requested and is one of the following:

A brother or sister sharing the same parents;

A half-brother or sister sharing one common parent;

A step-brother or sister (i.e. related by their parent’s marriage);

Any other child for whom it can be demonstrated that he or she is residing permanently at the same address (e.g. under the terms of a residence order)

The Authority will try to ensure that as far as possible siblings (including twins, triplets or children from other multiple births) can attend the same school. However, in the event that there is an insufficient number of places to allocate to twins, triplets etc. a decision will be made as to which child(ren) the place(s) are to be offered. In this situation a place or places will be offered to the first born (older child(ren)) and in cases where this is not known, the offer will be decided by lot.

### 3. Social or medical factors

If parents believe there are specific medical or social reasons for claiming priority for a child to attend the Academy, the relevant part of the preference form must be completed and evidence to support the claim must be submitted with the form. This must relate to the child.

Requests for such consideration will be subject to verification by Walsall Children's Services. This is necessary because parents will be asking the Authority to assess the child as having a stronger case than many other children, some of whom may live closer to the Academy.

#### **Medical**

Medical evidence must be submitted in writing from a medical practitioner and should state why the preferred Academy is the only Academy that can meet the child's needs.

#### **Social**

Social evidence must be submitted in writing from an appropriate professional and should state why the preferred Academy is the only Academy that can meet the child's needs.

Please note that only in exceptional cases are places prioritised in respect of a child's medical or social grounds.

#### **Distance**

Distance will be measured in a straight line from the centre point of the home address to the centre point of the Academy address using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system with those living closer to the Academy receiving the higher priority.

#### **Definition of a home address**

The home address of a child is considered to be the permanent residence of a child in a residential property when the place is offered. The address must be the child's only or main residence and is either:

- owned by the child's parent, parents or guardian; or
- leased to or rented by the child's parent, parents or guardian under lease or written rental agreement of not less than six months duration.

Documentary evidence of ownership or rental agreement may be required together with proof of actual permanent residence at the property concerned. In certain circumstances the child's current school will be asked to verify the address given.

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child and the child lives with both parents for part of the week, the main residence will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the week. Parents may be requested to supply documentary evidence to support the address used for the application.

The offer of a place is based upon the address of the child when the offer is made. If a child is offered a place at the Academy the place may be withdrawn if it is found that the child moved

(before the place was offered) to a new address which was further away from the Academy and the child would not have qualified for a place on the distance criterion.

In the event that a family moves between the application and the date of offer, the Academy Admissions Team must be informed as soon as possible of these circumstances.

If the home address is a flat (or apartment) and there is more than one flat at the same address, priority will be given to applications living at the lowest numbered flat and/or the flat on the lower floor.

#### **4. Minimum Entry Requirements for Year 12**

Students will be considered for entry into Year 12 based upon their academic attainment and/or individual subject grade criteria and the availability and suitability of courses at the Academy.

#### **Applications for Sixth Form**

The Sixth form admission number is 100 per year group. The criteria for admission is as follows:

#### **Level 3 qualifications**

For both Academic (A Level) and Vocational (e.g. BTEC):

- At least a grade 4 in English and maths (minimum of 5 in some subject areas)
- The individual student's Attainment 8 figure is used as an indicator for suitability of study
- Any other specific grade needed for individual courses