Grace Academy Coventry

Admissions Policy 2028-2029

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Explain **how to apply** for a place at Grace Academy Coventry;
- Set out the Trust's **arrangements for allocating places to the pupils** who apply to this Academy;
- 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 (e.g. Year 7), 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

This includes children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and have ceased to be in state care due to being adopted.

4. How to apply

For applications in the normal admissions round you should use the application form provided by Coventry City Council (click HERE). 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. In order to do so, Parents / Carers should contact the Vice Principal for admissions in writing stating the following:

- Child's full name and date of birth
- Any history of schooling outside of their chronological age group/year and the reasoning behind this
- Any medical or professional documentation which supports this request
- The length of time parents would like this to apply for (for example, one year or more than one year) and the reasoning behind this.

Decisions on requests for admission outside the normal age group will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case (including any potential safeguarding considerations) 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 premature
- 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. 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: 210

Arrangements for admission to Year 12 are set out in Appendix A

6.2 Oversubscription criteria

All children whose Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) names the Academy will be admitted before any other places are allocated. If there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place.

In the event that the Academy 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.

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 the distance between the Academy and a child's home as a tie breaker to decide between applicants. Priority will be given to children who live closest to the Academy. Distance will be calculated by the Local Authority using a straight-line measurement made using a computerised mapping system, from the centre of the applicants home address to the centre of the preferred academy as set by the Local Authority. All distances are subject to changes which may occur with updates of mapping data.

The address for admission purposes is the place where the child is permanently resident with his or her parent or parents or legal guardian(s). Where a child lives with parents with shared responsibility, the home address will be considered to be the address where the child sleeps for the majority of the week. If the child spends exactly equal amounts of time with each parent or guardian, it is the responsibility of the parents to decide which address is the home address for admission purposes. Parents should not assume that a place will automatically be allocated to their child.

Where the distance two (or more) children's homes and the Academy is the same, random allocation will be used to decide between them and will be overseen independently.

6.4 Challenging Behaviour

We will not refuse to admit a child on behavioural grounds in the normal admissions round or at any point in the normal year of entry. We may refuse admission in certain cases where the specific criteria listed in the School Admissions Code (paragraph 3.8) apply, i.e. where section 87 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 is engaged.

We may refuse admission for an in-year applicant for a year group that is not the normal point of entry, only in such a case that we have good reason to believe that the child may display challenging behavior that may adversely affect the provision we can offer. In this case, we will refer these pupils to the Fair Access Protocol. We will not refuse admission on these grounds to looked after children, previously looked after children and children with EHC plans listing the Academy.

6.5 Fair Access Protocol

We participate in Coventry City Council's Fair Access Protocol. This helps ensure that all children, including those who are unplaced and vulnerable or having difficulty in securing a school place in-year, get access to a school place as quickly as possible.

7. In-year admissions

7.1 In-year applications

Parents / Carers can apply for a place at any time outside the normal admissions round. As is the case in the normal admissions round, all children whose EHC Plan names the Academy will be admitted. Likewise, if there are spaces available in the year group you are applying for, your child will be offered a place.

7.2 Availability

A school's published admission number (PAN) only applies to the usual point of entry in a school. In the case of Grace Academy Coventry this is Year 7 or Year 12 (Sixth Form). For other year groups which are not the usual points of admission, it will be for the admission authority to determine whether there are available spaces or whether admissions beyond a particular level would cause prejudice to the provision of efficient education, i.e. would cause the Academy practical problems in delivering appropriate education provision to its existing pupils.

The Academy's default position is that the PAN (from the point of admission) continues to be a relevant benchmark to determine whether a request for admission can be accepted or rejected. There may however be occasions where the Academy feels it is necessary to set an operational capacity for a year group (or groups) which is different to the 'PAN'. In those cases, admission applications may be declined. If this is the case, the admission authority will communicate this decision the applicant.

If there are no spaces available at the time of application, the 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 students on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed in Appendix A. Priority will not be given to children on the basis that they have been on the waiting list the longest.

7.3 Bus passes

Bus passes may be available, at the discretion of the Local Authority for certain children who live a distance away from the school. The criteria varies depending upon whether the child is vulnerable, disadvantaged or eligible for the Pupil Premium.

7.4 Fraudulent applications

Address evidence is frequently requested, monitored and checked and places will be withdrawn when false information is provided.

In order to comply with the School Admissions Code, Coventry City Council will co-ordinate all in-year applications and the outcome of each one. Parents have the right to appeal against non-admission. School Admissions will write to you with the outcome of your application and if you have been unsuccessful, and if desired, how to begin the appeals process. Applications for in-year admissions should be submitted as set out in Appendix A.

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 which you can obtain from School Appeals (schoolappeals@coventry.gov.uk). 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 local governing body every year.

Appendix A – Grace Academy Coventry

Definitions and Further Information

Brothers and Sisters

The Admission Authority, Grace Academy Coventry 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 requests will be prioritised within that category by reference to distance. The Academy calculates these measurements on behalf of the academy. Distance will be calculated by the Local Authority using a straight-line measurement made using a computerised mapping system, from the centre of the applicant's home address to the centre of the preferred academy as set by the Local Authority. All distances are subject to changes which may occur with updates of mapping data. 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 Local Governing Body will use the tie break method as per paragraph 6.3 in the policy. Where the distance two (or more) children's homes and the Academy is the same, random allocation will be used to decide between them and will be overseen independently.

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.

Catchment Area

One of the aims of the Academy is to serve its neighborhood 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. The areas/roads which fall into the academy's catchment are listed on the Academy's website in the admission section.

Late Applications

All applications received up to and including 31 October 2028 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 2027. All other applications received after 31 October 2028 will be considered to be late and may not be processed until after 1 March 2029.

Operation of Waiting Lists

Subject to provisions regarding waiting lists and the Local Authority's coordinated 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. This will be maintained by the Academy in conjunction with School Admissions 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. Students will remain on the list until 31st December 2028. Parents who wish for their child's name to be placed on the waiting list from January 2029 until the end of the academic year should notify School Admissions who operate the list.

A child's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription set out in paragraph 2 (clauses a to f) below. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Oversubscription Criteria

As previously stated, all children whose Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan names the Academy will be admitted before any other places are allocated. If there are more requests than there are places available within the Academy's 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 or Special Guardianship Order and including those children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted. A looked-after child is defined in Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.

b) Children of staff at the Academy, in either of the following circumstances:

- The member of staff has been employed at the Academy for 2 or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the Academy is made, or

- The member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.

c) 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.

d) Other children who live in the catchment area served by the Academy.

e) 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.

f) Children by reference to the distance from home to the preferred Academy. If it is not possible to meet all of the requests in any one of the categories described above, they will be prioritised by reference to distance from home to the Academy. If a tie break situation arises, places will be offered as per paragraph 6.3.

Applications for Sixth Form

The Sixth Form capacity is 140 pupils (including an external Pan of 10 applicants). The criteria for admission are as follows:

- For level 3 qualifications, students require at least 5 GCSEs (or level 2 equivalent) at grade 5 or above including English and Maths. In addition, individual subjects may have specific further requirements and students must meet all the requirements for three level 3 qualifications to be accepted.

All entry requirements are discussed with potential applicants at interview.

We will follow the same oversubscription criteria for students who meet our criteria as set out in the main policy in Appendix A – section 2.