



Diocese of Chelmsford Vine Schools Trust

# The Diocese of Chelmsford

## Vine Schools Trust

### Admissions Policy

This policy is a model policy that must be reviewed and customised by each Vine Academy.

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Trust is the admissions authority for all the Academies within the Trust. There is a requirement for the Trust to have in place a clear procedure for how it manages all admissions processes to comply with the relevant legislations and codes of practice.
- 1.2 As publicly-funded schools, academies must have admission arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than available places.
- 1.3 The Trust must ensure that the practices and the criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are fair, clear and objective. Parents should be able to look at a set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated.
- 1.4 The policy is written to comply with:
  - 1.4.1 Schools Admissions Code (December 2014)
  - 1.4.2 Schools Admissions Appeals Code (February 2012)

## **2. Statutory and Funding Agreement Requirements**

- 2.1 All Vine Academies are required to provide education for pupils of different abilities (i.e. they may not select pupils by ability)
- 2.2 All Vine Academies are required to provide education for pupils wholly or mainly drawn from the area in which the academy is situated and are not allowed to charge for admission.
- 2.3 Vine Academies are required to comply with the Admissions and Admission Appeals Codes as if they were maintained schools.
- 2.4 Vine Academies are also required to participate in local authority co-ordination of admissions processes and the local authority's Fair Access Protocol.
- 2.5 Vine Academies are required to comply with any Direction from the Secretary of State to admit a pupil to the academy, or to amend their admission arrangements if they fail to comply with the Admissions Code.

## **3. Delegation of Authority to the Local Governing Body**

- 3.1 The Vine scheme of delegation places the following authority and obligations on the Local Governing Board of each Academy:
- 3.2 The LGB shall ensure that the Admissions policy for the Academy is consistent with the Admissions Policy of the Trust and that it is published on the Academy's website.
- 3.3 Decisions on admissions shall be made by the LGB in line with the Admissions Policies and procedures mentioned above.
- 3.4 Appeals shall be heard by and through the Essex Independent Appeals Process.

## **4. Procedures**

- 4.1 Each Academy will participate in the co-ordinated admissions process for normal admissions in the local authority in which it resides.
- 4.2 Where a ranking service is provided by the Local Authority the academy should take advantage of this.
- 4.3 The Trust will review the admissions policy of each Academy to confirm its compliance with the relevant codes, and Trust processes.

## 5. Requirements for Notification and Publication

- 5.1 Each Academy must publish copies of their determined arrangements on their website for the whole offer year (the academic year in which offers for places are made) (Paragraph 1.47 of the Code).
- 5.2 Any proposed changes to the admissions arrangements (including any supplementary information form) at an individual Academy must be approved by the Trust Board. In addition the Diocese Board of Education will also need to be consulted for any of the Academies with Church of England religious designation.
- 5.3 Where changes are proposed public consultation must be for a minimum of 6 weeks and must take place between 1st October and 31st January of the school year before those arrangements are to apply. For example, for entry in September 2018 consultation must be completed by 31st January 2017.
- 5.4 Once all arrangements have been determined, arrangements can be objected to and referred to the Schools Adjudicator. Objections to admission arrangements must be referred to the Adjudicator by 15th May in the determination year. Any decision of the Adjudicator must be acted on by the admission authority and admission arrangements amended accordingly.
- 5.5 The local authority will collate and publish all the admission arrangements in the area in a single composite prospectus.
- 5.6 As our own admissions authority we are not required to consult on Published Admission Number (PAN) where we are proposing either to increase or keep the same PAN (1.3).
- 5.7 Where a PAN is approved that is higher than in previous years, the Trust Board must notify the local authority that they have done so, and require the Academy to publish this change clearly on their website.
- 5.8 If the school is not oversubscribed, all applicants must be offered a place.
- 5.9 Each Academy will clear set out in its policy the criteria against which places will be allocated at the school when there are more applications than places and the order in which the criteria will be applied. These criteria must be fully compliant with the Admissions Code.
- 5.10 The academy admissions policy must state clearly in their arrangements what they mean by 'sibling' and must clearly set out how distance from home to the school will be measured, making clear how the 'home' address will be determined and the point in the school from which all distances are measured. Catchment areas must be designed so that they are reasonable and clearly defined.
- 5.11 Any changes to the oversubscription criteria must be approved by the Trust Board.
- 5.12 All admission arrangement must be published by 28th April in the year previous to that in which they are to apply, even if they have not changed from previous years and a consultation has not been required.
- 5.13 Therefore any proposed changes by an LGB must be advised to the Trust in writing by the 31st December in that school year in order for it to be properly considered and approved.
- 5.14 Each individual academy is responsible for posting the admissions arrangements on its website and submitting a copy of their full, determined arrangements to the local authority before 15th March each year.
- 5.15 When the LGB informs a parent of a decision to refuse their child a place an Academy it must include the reason why admission was refused; information about the right to appeal; the deadline for lodging an appeal and the contact details for making an appeal. This contact is the Essex Independent Appeals Panel.
- 5.16 Parents must be informed that, if they wish to appeal, they must set out their grounds for appeal in writing.

## **6. Waiting Lists**

- 6.1 Each Vine academy must maintain a clear, fair and objective waiting list until at least 31 December of each school year of admission, stating in their arrangements that each added child will require the list to be ranked again in line with the published oversubscription criteria. Priority must not be given to children based on the date their application was received or their name was added to the list. Looked after children, previously looked after children, and those allocated a place at the school in accordance with a Fair Access Protocol, must take precedence over those on a waiting list.

## **7. In Year Admissions**

- 7.1 Each academy must continue to use the local authority to co-ordinate in-year admissions.

## **8. Review**

- 8.1 There will be an annual review of this policy by the Trust Board.