

TOWER HAMLETS CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Proposed Admissions Policy for Community Secondary Schools
(Central Foundation Girls School, George Greens School, Mulberry Academy Shoreditch,
Mulberry School for Girls and
Stepney Green Maths Computing and Science College)

2020/21



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1. Foreword

- 1.1 Tower Hamlets Local Authority seeks to operate an admissions system that provides equal and fair opportunities to all applicants. This includes having due regard to children living in areas where there are limited options in applying for a local school place.
- 1.2 The Local Authority's community school admissions policy has been determined following an extensive public consultation and approval by the Council's Cabinet of elected members. It is reviewed annually by the School Admission Forum, with representation from all key stakeholders including parents, headteachers, school governors, diocesan bodies and community organisations.

2. Children with Education, Health and Care Plans

- 2.1 Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan naming the school applied to, must be placed before all other applicants. The place will be provided in the appropriate band (**See note 1**). This process is separate from the standard admission arrangements set out below.

3. Oversubscription Criteria

- 3.1 A quarter of the total places available at these schools are allocated to each of four bands (**see 'Banding' below**). If any of these are oversubscribed in any band, the admission criteria below will be used (in descending order of priority) to allocate places:
 - 1) Children looked after by the local authority, previously looked after children who have left care under a special arrangements (residence) or special guardianship order, or those adopted from local authority care (**See note 2**).
 - 2) Children who have a strong medical or social reason to attend the school applied to. This can include the parents', carers' or other family members' medical conditions and the family's social needs. Parents must complete the relevant section on the application form and attach medical and/or social reports from a suitable professional (e.g. a doctor or social worker) to support the application. (**See note 3**).
 - 3) Children living nearest the school who are the first born of their sex in the case of a single sex school, or the eldest child in the case of a mixed school. The number of children admitted under this category will reflect 25% of the intake of the school in each band.
 - 4) Children who have a brother or sister at the school at the time of admission. (**See note 4**).
 - 5) Children whose parent is a member of staff who has been employed at the school concerned for two or more years at the time of application and/ or children of a member of staff who has been recruited to fill a vacancy for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage. (**See note 5**).
 - 6) Children who live nearest to the school by the shortest walking route. (**See note 6**).
- 3.2 In categories 3, 4 and 5 above, a higher priority will be given to pupils who live in the priority geographical areas of South Wapping or West Bethnal Green applying to one of the designated schools. (**see 'Priority Areas' below**).
- 3.3 **Note 1:** Parents of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) should note that Tower Hamlets LA seeks to ensure that pupils with EHCPs do not, at secondary transfer time, become unduly concentrated in a few schools. Experience indicates that this can compromise the efficient education of children and the efficient use of resources. This means that if any particular school receives a large number of applications for pupils with EHCPs, some of these may be refused. All applications for pupils with EHCPs will be considered by the Special Educational Needs Panel.

Note 2: Confirmation of a child's looked after status will be required.

Note 3: Applications under this category are considered by the Primary to Secondary Transfer Committee, comprising a Headteacher, a senior member of the Attendance and Welfare Service and a medical professional. The Committee will decide whether the application should be given priority under this category.

Note 4: Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, adopted brother or sister, step brother or sister, or the child of the parent/carer's partner. In every case, the child should be living in the same family unit at the same address. The address used should be the one that the child usually lives at and attends school from.

Note 5: Priority will be limited to three places in each year. The staff applicant must complete the relevant section on the application form and attach documentation supporting admission on these grounds. It is the staff applicant's sole responsibility to provide this information. Without the provision of the relevant documents, the child will not be considered on these grounds.

Note 6: Home to school distances will be measured by the shortest walking route from the home address to the nearest available pupil entrance in constant use to the school, using a computerised digitised map.

4 Banding

- 4.1 Tower Hamlets has a policy of banding to try to ensure that its schools take in an even balance of pupils in different ability ranges. All Tower Hamlets community schools as well as Central Foundation, George Green's, Mulberry Academy Shoreditch, London Enterprise Academy, Mulberry School for Girls, Sir John Cass Foundation & Red Coat, St Paul's Way Trust and Stepney Green Maths Computing and Science College use banding.
- 4.2 The band for a pupil attending a Tower Hamlets primary school is determined from the National Foundation for Education Research (NFER) Test for reading and mathematics taken in the summer term of year 5. The results of the tests are used to place a child in one of four bands Band A,B, C and D. D is the highest scoring band
- 4.3 For pupils applying from primary schools outside of Tower Hamlets we determine the band by asking the primary school for a teacher assessment.

5. Priority areas

- 5.1 The south Wapping priority area is the area south of Cable Street and Royal Mint Street, west of Butcher Row, north of the Thames and east of Mansell Street and Tower Bridge Approach. Children living in this area will have priority for admission to the designated schools, which are Mulberry and Stepney Green.
- 5.2 The west Bethnal Green priority area is the area south of Quaker Street, west of Brick Lane, north of Whitechapel High Street and east of Middlesex Street. Children living in this area will have priority for admission to the designated school, which is Swanlea.

6. Exceptional Medical or Social Reasons

- 6.1 Where there is a very strong medical or social reason for attending a particular school priority may be given for admission. Parents must complete the relevant section on the transfer form and attach medical and/or social reports signed by a doctor or social worker to the form. These reports must be received by the closing date on 31st October 2019. The application will be considered by the Primary / Secondary Transfer Committee.

7. Confirmation of Address

- 7.1 Parents must provide acceptable independent proof of their child's address. They must make sure that the application form they complete is accurate and to contact Pupil Services or tell their child's headteacher if there are relevant changes after it is submitted. Places may be withdrawn if false information is entered on the application form. Parents who do not provide evidence of their child's address as requested, or provide conflicting or inconclusive information, may have the place withdrawn, even if it has already been accepted. When parents live separately, the address used should be the one that their child usually lives at and attends school from. If a child lives equally with both parents at different addresses, it is the parents' responsibility to make this clear on the application form. Parents may be asked to provide acceptable proof.

8. Siblings in the same year group transferring

- 8.1 Where two or more siblings are in the same year group (e.g. twins), and it is the parent's wish that the siblings should attend the same school, if one sibling can be offered a place at a school, the other will automatically be offered so as not to separate them.

9. Applying for a Place

- 9.1 How to apply for a secondary school is set out in the 'Ready for Secondary School in Tower Hamlets' booklet. Applications are then co-ordinated for Tower Hamlets area in accordance with the Authority's published scheme. The scheme can be viewed on the following webpage: http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgs/1-50/17_schools/school_admissions.aspx.
- 9.2 The closing date for applications is **31 October 2019** and the date on which families are sent notification of the outcome is **2 March 2020**.

10. Late applications

- 10.1 Applications received after the 31 October 2019 closing date will be treated as late applications unless there is evidence to show that the application or amendment could not reasonably have been made on time. A new preference or change in the order of preferences will not be accepted after the closing date unless the circumstances are deemed to be exceptional. Late applications will be given a lower priority and will be dealt with after all on time applications in the first round of offers on 2 March 2020. Where a school is oversubscribed late applications will be refused and placed on the waiting list in accordance with the admission criteria.

11. Changing Preferences

- 11.1 Parents and carers may not change their preferences unless there is exceptional and genuine reasons for doing so, for example, change of address. Requests to change preferences must be made in writing giving the full reasons.

12. Waiting Lists

- 12.1 The Pupil Services Team will hold the waiting lists for Tower Hamlets community schools and schools that use the council's admission policy. Until September 2020, the waiting lists for each band will be kept in the following descending order of priority:

1. Children with a brother or sister in the school at the time of admission
2. Children living nearest the school.

If a vacancy arises, it will be offered to the first applicant on the waiting list for that band. If a school cannot fill all the places available in a particular band, places will be filled by applicants from adjoining bands.

From September – December 2020, the waiting lists are combined into one list, disregarding the bands. The order of priority for the waiting list will then be:

1. Children looked after by the local authority, previously looked after children who left care under a residence or special guardianship order, or those adopted from local authority care.
2. Children without a school place.
3. Children with a brother or sister in the school.
4. Children living nearest the school.

Proximity to school will determine priority where there are competing claims to a place.

If parents wish for their child to remain on the Year 7 waiting list after December, they must complete an In-Year Transfer form, which is available from the Pupil Services Team. Please note that transfers take place at the beginning of each term. The timetable is included in the guidance notes that accompany the In-Year Transfer form and can also be viewed on the Council website:

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/schooladmissions.

A South Wapping

Priority admission to Mulberry and Stepney Green schools is given to pupils in the following areas:

- i South of Cable Street and royal Mint Street
- ii west of Butcher row
- iii North of the River Thames
- iv East of Mansell Street

B West Bethnal Green

Priority admission to Swanlea School is given to pupils:

- i South of Quaker Street
- ii West of Brick Lane
- iii North of Whitechapel High Street
- iv East of Middlesex Street

