

## SET Saxmundham School Admission Policy for September 2023 Intake

| <b>Document Owner:</b>              | Trust Board          |
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| <b>Responsible Trust Committee:</b> | Trust Board          |
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| <b>APPROVED<br/>Signature (Trust Board):</b> |  |
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| <b>Date:</b>                                 |  |

## Other relevant policies and documents

- RSE Policy (secondary)
- Relationships Education Policy (primary)
- SMSC Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Equalities Policy (student)
- Inclusion Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

## Explanation of Terms

|           |   |                                       |
|-----------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Trust     | = | Seckford Education Trust              |
| School(s) | = | schools within the Trust              |
| PSHE      | = | Personal, Social, Health and Economic |
| SMSC      | = | Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural |

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 SET Saxmundham (School) is a secondary school located in Saxmundham, Suffolk. It is part of Seckford Education Trust (Trust), a multi school trust.
- 1.2 Admission to all state funded schools is governed by the School Admissions Code 2021 (Code). Under the Code, the Trust is the 'Admission Authority' for the School, and has a legal duty to formally determine the 'admission arrangements' for each year's intake in accordance with the requirements of the Code. This policy and any admission related documents referred to herein and/or used during the admission process together form the School's admission arrangements.
- 1.3 The Trust Board carries out the task of formally determining the admission arrangements for the school each year. Thereafter, the School's admission arrangements are implemented by the Trust Admissions Team.

## 2. Definition of a 'Parent'

- 2.1 In this policy and in education law, the definition of a 'parent' includes a natural or adoptive parent of the child (regardless of whether they child lives with them, has contact with them, or they have parental responsibility for the child). It also includes

any person who is not a natural or adoptive parent of the child, but who has care of and/or parental responsibility for the child. A person has care of a child if they are a person with whom the child lives who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.

### 3. Inclusivity and Equality

- 3.1 The School is fully inclusive and welcome applications for the admission of children with special educational needs (**SEN**), physical, mental or behavioural disabilities and other protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010. The School's admission arrangements are determined and implemented with its equality duties in mind, including the public sector equality duty (**PSED**).

### 4. Children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)

- 4.1 Children with an EHC plan are admitted to schools under separate statutory procedures which are managed by the child's home Local Authority, rather than under that school's determined admission arrangements. Parents of children with an EHC plan should therefore liaise with their home Local Authority's SEN team if they want the School to be named in their child's EHC plan as their child's school.
- 4.2 Where the School is named in a child's EHC plan (after the statutory process, including consultation with the School, has been completed), the child will be admitted. Where this happens in the normal admission round (i.e. entry to Reception Year in September), these children will be allocated places before all other children, reducing the number of places left within the published admission number (**PAN**).
- 4.3 The School operates two Special Educational Needs unit (SEN unit) in Year 7 to Year 11 for up to **36 pupils** with Interaction and Communication needs and Cognition and Learning needs.
- 4.4 This pupil number is in addition to the PAN.
- 4.5 All of the pupils in the SEN units will have an EHC plan, and are therefore allocated places under separate statutory procedures referred to above.

### 5. Published Admissions Numbers (PANs)

- 5.1 The PAN for Year 7 is **120** pupils.

## 6. Oversubscription Criteria for Reception Year

6.1 Where there are more applications than places available, the order in which places will be allocated will be as follows:

### 6.1.1 Looked after and previously looked after children

A 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a Local Authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in the exercise of their social services functions, in England. A 'previously looked after child' is a child who was looked after (in England), but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements or residence order, or a special guardianship order, as well as a child who appears to the Trust Board to have been in state care outside of England care (i.e. in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, religious organisation or any other provider whose sole / main purpose is to benefit society), but ceased to be so as a result of being adopted.

- Applications in this category must be accompanied by documentary evidence confirming that the child meets the criteria, as follows:
  - Children looked after in England - a signed letter from the child's current social worker;
  - Children previously looked after in England - a signed letter from the child's previous social worker confirming their status and, if necessary, an original or certified copy of an adoption, child arrangements or special guardianship order from a UK court;
  - Children previously looked after outside England - documentary evidence of having been in state care outside of England, and of being adopted. Where the child's status can be formally verified by the Virtual School Head at their home Local Authority, it will **not** be necessary for parents to provide documentary evidence.

### 6.1.2 Children with a sibling at the School

For inclusion in this category, the sibling must attend the School in Year 7 to Year 10 at the time the application is submitted/the application deadline, and be in Year 8 to Year 11 at the time the applicant child is admitted.

For the purpose of this category, a 'sibling' is a full sibling (sharing both parents), a half sibling (sharing one parent), an adopted sibling, a long term foster sibling (i.e. not a temporary placement), a step sibling (one child's parent married to or in a civil partnership with the other child's parent), or a child of their parent's cohabiting partner.

In all cases, the sibling must live and sleep for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday night during term time at the child's home address

(as defined by this policy) and be part of the same core family unit. For the avoidance of doubt, a child of a friend or extended family member (e.g. cousin) will not be a 'sibling' for this purpose, even if they live at the same address as the applicant child.

For inclusion in this category, parents must state the sibling's full details in the application form.

#### 6.1.3 All other children

This category will include all children who do not fall into the oversubscription categories above.

## 7. Tie Breaker

- 7.1 Where there are more applications than places remaining in any of the oversubscription categories set out above, the order in which places will be allocated will be determined by the distance between the child's home address (as defined by this policy) and the School, with those living nearest receiving highest priority.
- 7.2 Distance will be measured in a straight line (i.e. 'as the crow flies'). This will be calculated electronically by Suffolk County Council using data provided jointly by the Post Office and Ordnance Survey. The data plots the co-ordinates for the child's home address and the School's address and thereby provides an address-point between which the straight line distance is measured and reported to three decimal places. Where the child lives in a multi-dwelling building (for example, an apartment block), distance will be measured from same address-point for the building, so that the distance will be the same for all children living there.
- 7.3 Where two or more children live an equal distance from the School (including where they live in the same multi-dwelling building), the order in which places are allocated will be determined by random allocation supervised by someone who is independent of the School, Trust and Local Authority.

## 8. Child's Home Address

- 8.1 The child's home address is defined in this policy as the residential (not business) address of their parent at which they live and sleep for more than 50% of their time from Sunday to Thursday night during term time. It will usually (but not necessarily always) be the address at which they are registered with their GP, hospital, dentist and/or optician, and/or where Child Benefit/Child Tax Credit (if eligible) is claimed, at the time of application.
- 8.2 Where any uncertainty arises in respect of the child's home address, the School reserves the right to seek documentary evidence to establish which address meets

the definition stated in the paragraph above. For the avoidance of doubt, it is the address which meets this definition that will be used to process the application, which may not be the address given by the parent in their application.

- 8.3 Where the child/child's family is/are not living in the area of the School at the time the application is submitted, the application will still be accepted and processed. However, the address used will be the child's current address (i.e. the address currently meeting the definition above) unless the application is supported by documentary evidence confirming that the new address which will meet the definition set out above (for example, a signed tenancy agreement, mortgage offer, HMLR title deed/document, official letter confirming exchange of contracts, etc.). The evidence must demonstrate that the planned move is intended to be permanent, barring unforeseen events.

## 9. Children of UK Service Personnel/ Crown Servants

- 9.1 Applications for the admission of children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting, or Crown servants returning from overseas, will be accepted and processed in advance of the family's arrival in the area, as long as the application is accompanied by an official letter giving a relocation date.
- 9.2 The address at which the child will live will be used to apply the oversubscription criteria, provided parents provide some evidence of the intended address (for example, a signed tenancy agreement, mortgage offer, HMLR title deed/document, official letter confirming exchange of contracts, etc.). Alternatively, where requested by parents, a Unit or quartering address will be used for this purpose.
- 9.3 These arrangements are necessary to support the Government's commitment to removing disadvantage for these children. Nevertheless, the School will not reserve blocks of places for these children - applications will be processed in the usual way.

## 10. Twins, Triplets and Siblings of a Higher Multiple Birth

- 10.1 In Year 7, where at least one child achieves an offer of a place at the School within the PAN in the normal way, but their twin, triplet(s) or sibling(s) of a higher multiple birth do not achieve an offer of a place, the School will admit their twin, triplet(s) or sibling(s) of a higher multiple birth to avoid them having to attend different schools, even where this means exceeding the PAN.
- 10.2 In Years 8 to 11, where at least one child can be accommodated without prejudicing the efficient education of others or use of resources, their twins, triplet(s) and sibling(s) of a higher multiple birth will also be offered a place to avoid them having to attend different schools.

## 11. Application Procedure for Admission to Reception Year in September (including Late Applications)

- 11.1 Applications for admission to Year 7 in September are known as applications made 'in the normal admission round'.
- 11.2 Applications in the normal admission round are coordinated by the Local Authority for all schools in its area. This includes **late applications** (i.e. applications received before the first day of term September, but not made in time to enable the Local Authority to offer a place on National Offer Day).
- 11.3 Applications in the normal admission round must be made **directly to the child's home Local Authority** by completing and submitting a Common Application Form (CAF), which is available to download/complete online via the child's home Local Authority's website, **by the application deadline**. Parents must state a preference for the School in the CAF.
- 11.4 Parents should carefully consider the oversubscription criteria stated above to determine whether other documentation must be submitted in support of the application. This documentation must be submitted to the child's home Local Authority **by the application deadline**. If it isn't, there will be a significant risk that the child will be placed in a lower oversubscription category because they were not identified as qualifying for a higher one.
- 11.5 The application deadline for admission to Year 7 in the normal admission round is **Monday, 31 October 2022**.
- 11.6 National Offer Day for admission to Year 7 in the normal admission round is **Wednesday, 1 March 2022**.
- 11.7 **Late applications** (as defined above) will be processed by the Local Authority after all on-time applications have been processed, which will unfortunately reduce the chances of the child being offered a place. Parents are therefore strongly advised to submit their applications on time.

## 12. In-Year Admission Applications

- 12.1 An in-year admission application is one for admission to Year 7 submitted after the first day of term in September, or for admission to any other year group. This is also known as admission 'outside the normal admission round'.
- 12.2 Parents should note that the PAN set for Year 7 only applies for the duration of the

school year of entry (i.e. to applications both in and outside of the normal admission round to Year 7 only). Such applications may be refused where there are no places remaining with the PAN set for that intake.

- 12.3 Where applications are made for admission to any year group other than Year 7, the child will be admitted to the School **unless admitting an additional child would prejudice the efficient provision of education, and/or the efficient use of resources**.
- 12.4 Where there are multiple applicants for a year group other than Year 7, and the School has determined that only a lower number of additional children can be admitted without exceeding the PAN (Year 7) or prejudicing the efficient provision of education, and/or the efficient use of resources (Year 8 to 11), the School will apply the oversubscription criteria to determine which of the children are offered a place.
- 12.5 The School manages its own in-year admissions - it is not part of the Local Authority's coordinated scheme in this respect. Applications for in-year admission **must therefore be made directly to the School, not the Local Authority**, by completing an In-Year Admission Application Form and submitting it to the School in hard copy marked for the attention of the Head of School or electronically by email to [enquiries@seckfordeducation.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@seckfordeducation.org.uk). The form is available to download on the School's website or in hard copy from the School's main office.
- 12.6 Parents should carefully consider the oversubscription criteria stated above to determine whether other documentation should be submitted in support of the application, should the oversubscription criteria need to be applied. This documentation should be submitted at the same time as the application. If it isn't, there will be a significant risk that the child will be placed in a lower oversubscription category because they were not identified as qualifying for a higher one.
- 12.7 The School will use its best endeavours to notify parents in writing of the outcome of applications for in-year application within 10 school days of receipt of the application. In any event, parents will be notified of the outcome in writing within 15 school days of receipt of the application.
- 12.8 Where a place is offered, arrangements will be made for the child to be admitted and start school as soon as possible, particularly where they are not currently attending school.
- 12.9 Where the application is refused, parents will be provided with the reasons why the admission of their child would prejudice the efficient education of others, and/or the efficient use of resources, so that they can properly consider whether to exercise their right to appeal (as set out further below).



- 12.10 The School will also notify the Local Authority of every application for in-year admission received and its outcome as soon as reasonably practicable but in any event within 2 school days of notifying the parents of the outcome.

### 13. Waiting List

- 13.1 The School operates a waiting list for children who are unsuccessful in achieving a place in Year 7 until 31 December in Year 7 only.
- 13.2 The waiting list is ranked strictly in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out in this policy, and not by reference to the date that the child's name was added to the list. This means that a child's name can go down as well as up the waiting list as more names are added.
- 13.3 Children placed at the School under the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol will take priority over children on the waiting list.

### 14. Statutory Right of Appeal

- 14.1 Parents have a statutory right of appeal against the refusal of a place at the School. This applies to applications in the normal admission round (including late applications) and in-year applications.
- 14.2 Whenever an application is refused, a letter notifying the parents of this decision and the reasons for it must be sent. This letter will contain full details of the statutory right of appeal against the refusal of a place, emphasising the requirement for grounds to be stated, and clearly stating the deadline for lodging an appeal.
- 14.3 The School will also publish an appeals timetable for appeals against the refusal of a place in the normal admission round (i.e. to Year 7 in September) alongside this policy on or before 28 February in the year in which offers are made.

### 15. Requests for Admission Outside Normal Age Group

- 15.1 Parents have a right to request that their child is admitted to a year group other than their normal year group at the School. This may be to a year group below or above, and there may be a variety of reasons for making this request. For example, the child might be gifted, suffer from long-term or serious illness, or have been educated overseas and/or used to studying at a different level (these are examples only, not an exhaustive list).

- 15.2 However, parents do not have a right to decide that their child **will** be admitted outside their normal age group. Such requests must be considered by the Admissions Committee, in order to decide whether or not to agree the request **in principle**, or refuse the request, taking into account the factors set out below.
- 15.3 Requests for admission outside normal age group are not applications for admission, which must still be made in the usual way. Parents are strongly encouraged to make their requests in a timely manner, preferably well ahead of any application deadlines, so that they can obtain a decision in principle which will enable them to make informed decisions when they subsequently apply for admission. A separate request must be made to the Admission Authority for each school being considered.
- 15.4 The Admissions Committee will make decisions on the basis of **the circumstances of each case** and in the **best interests of the child concerned**, taking into account the parents' views, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, the child's medical history and the views of their medical professionals, whether they have previously been educated or attended nursery out of their normal age group, and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group, if it were not for being born prematurely. They must also take into account the views of the Headteacher of the School. Where provided, they will also take into account the views of the Headteacher of any current or previous school. This is not an exhaustive list, and parents may put forward any matters for the Admission Committee to consider.
- 15.5 Parents should make their requests by completing a [Request for Admission Outside Normal Age Group Form](#) and submitting it with any supporting documents to the School marked for the attention of the Admissions Team. This form is available to download on the School's website or in hard copy from the School's main office.
- 15.6 In all cases, the Admissions Team will notify parents of the outcome of their request formally in writing, explaining its reasons in sufficient detail for parents to understand why it came to that decision. Where the request is agreed in principle, this letter should accompany the application for admission subsequently made for a place at the School.
- 15.7 Parents do not have a statutory right of appeal against a refusal of a request for admission outside normal age group, but they may submit a complaint under the School's published Complaints Policy if they do not believe the request was dealt with by the Admissions Team properly. Parents do, of course, have a statutory right of appeal if they also applied for admission and a place was refused in the child's normal year group as well.

## 16. Review and Determination of the School

- 16.1 The term 'admission arrangements' means *"The overall procedure, practices, criteria, and supplementary information to be used in deciding the allocation of school places and refers to any device or means used to determine whether a school place is to be offered"*. The admission arrangements therefore include not only this policy, but all

other admission related documents and any other published information about the School's admission processes.

- 16.2 Under the Code, the Admission Authority for a school must formally determine the admission arrangements for the next intake at that school **every year on or before 28 February**. Where no changes (other than changing dates/deadlines) are proposed, there is no need to go to consultation. However, where changes are proposed (other than a proposed increase in PAN), the Admission Authority must carry out a 6 week statutory consultation in accordance with the Code between 1 October and 31 January ahead of determination of the admission arrangements.
- 16.3 Where no changes have been proposed in the intervening period, the Admission Authority must in any event consult on the admission arrangements every 7 years.
- 16.4 Once determined on or before 28 February, the School's admission arrangements for that intake must be published, and cannot be varied except in very limited circumstances to correct a mistake or give effect to a decision of a Schools Adjudicator. Any other variations will require Secretary of State consent, which will only be granted where there has been a 'major change in circumstances'.
- 16.5 The admission arrangements for the September 2023 intake were determined by the Trust Board at their Lent Term 2022 meeting.