

Admissions Policy for Accrington Academy

Preamble:

1. This document sets out the proposed arrangements for Accrington Academy, throughout this document referred to as “the Academy”. These arrangements are without prejudice to the provisions of Annex B to the Master Agreement. The document forms an annex to the Supplemental Agreement between United Learning Trust (‘ULT’) and the Secretary of State. References in this document to “parents” include guardians and carers.

2. The Academy will comply with all relevant provisions of the statutory codes on admissions (the School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code of Practice) as they apply at any given time to maintained schools and with the law on admissions as it applies to maintained schools. Reference in the codes to admission authorities shall be deemed to be references to ULT. References to “the LA” shall be deemed to be references to Lancashire County Council and references to “the Admissions Forum” to be to the Lancashire admissions Forum. In particular, the Academy will take part in the Admissions Forum set up by the LA and have regard to its advice; and will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by the LA.

3. Notwithstanding these arrangements, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to admit a named pupil to the Academy on application from an LA. Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult the Academy.

Admission Arrangements to be Approved by Secretary of State

4. The admission arrangements for the Academy, subject to any changes approved by the Secretary of State, are:

a) The Academy has an agreed admission number of 200 students. The academy will accordingly admit at least 200 students in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received.

b) The Academy may set a higher admission number as its published admission number for any specific year. Before setting an admission number higher than its agreed admission number, the Academy will consult those listed in paragraph 19 below. Students will not be admitted above the published admission number unless exceptional circumstances apply and such circumstances shall be reported to the Secretary of State.

Process of Application

5. Applications for places at the Academy will be made in accordance with the LA’s co-ordinated admission arrangements and will be made on the Common Application Form provided and administered by the LA. The Academy will be using the following timetable for applications each year (exact dates within the months may vary from year to year) which, whenever possible, will fit in with the common timetable agreed by the Admissions Forum or LA:

- a) September – The Academy will publish in its prospectus information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for the following September (e.g. in September 2010 for admission in September 2011). This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective students and their parents to visit the school. The Academy will also provide information to the LA for inclusion in the composite prospectus, as required;
- b) September/October – The Academy will provide opportunities for parents to visit the Academy;
- c) October – Common Application Form to be completed and returned to the LA to administer;
- d) November – LA sends application details to the Academy;
- e) The Academy returns ranked list, based on admissions criteria, of all applications to LA within the agreed timescale.
- f) February – LA applies agreed scheme for local schools, informing other LAs of offers to be made to their residents;
- g) 1st March offers made to parents.

Consideration of Applications

6. The Academy will consider all applications for places. Where fewer than 180 applications are received, the Academy will offer places to all those who have applied.

7. Notwithstanding paragraph 6 above, the Academy may refuse admission to particular applicants in cases where fewer than the published admission number have applied. These are applicants who have been permanently excluded from two or more other schools and the ability to refuse admissions runs for a period of two years since the last exclusion. Exclusions which took place before the child concerned reached compulsory school age do not count for this purpose. This applies to admissions at all age levels.

Procedures where the Academy is oversubscribed

8. Children with a Statement of Special Educational Need, that names the Academy in Part 4 of the statement, will be given priority for admission.

Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below. These will be applied in the order in which they are set out below:

Criteria Applied to Admissions in 2010-2011 and Subsequent Years

- a) Children who have previously been or are in public care (children looked after.)
- b) Children who have specific medical needs, social needs and special needs where the application is supported by written specific medical advice as to why admission to the Academy is necessary. The definition as to what constitutes medical, social and special need within the scope of this provision will be available in writing to parents in the prospectus as part of the admissions policy. It is the responsibility of parents to show that it is essential for the child to

attend the Academy rather than any other school.

c) Siblings of students who will be attending the Academy on the date when the applicant would be admitted other than students who at the time are in sixth form but where not previously in lower years. The term sibling means a full, step, half, adopted or fostered brother or sister, but not cousins, who lives at the same permanent address. The Academy reserves the right to ask for proof of relationship.

d) Students who have received education within a school that is within the linked learning family federation of schools for United Learning.

e) Children whose permanent address is closest to the Academy. The distance will be measured as the direct line distance 'as the crow flies' measured between the child's permanent address to the Academy's main entrance on Queens Road West using SMART (Schools Mapping Admissions Routing and Transport System) software. The distance is measured to the exact Ordnance Survey point of each applicant's home. A child's permanent address is where he or she normally lives and sleeps and goes to school from.

f) If false or misleading information is used to gain entry to the Academy, the offer of a place will be withdrawn and the application cancelled.

In the event of a tie-break being necessary within any of the criteria, this will be conducted through a process of random allocation.

Arrangements for Admission to Post 16 Provision

9. The Academy will offer a range of post-16 courses at levels, 1, 2 and 3 in order to ensure accessibility to a large number of students and will publish specific criteria in relation to the entrance requirements for each course. The detailed information will be contained in the sixth form prospectus published annually.

10. Children already on roll are entitled to transfer to the sixth form if they meet the published standards for entry.

11. The sixth form will open for students in Year 12 from September 2009 and for students in Year 13 from September 2010. Only those applicants who meet the minimum published standards for entry will be considered.

12. The admission number for the sixth form will be 125 students. The Academy will accept external students up to that figure less the number of the Academy's own students who are accepted into the sixth form. If the sixth form is oversubscribed, the following criteria will be used to determine which external students to admit:

a) Applicants whose permanent address is closest to the Academy as determined by the process outlined above at 8 relating to the criteria for 2010-2011 and subsequent years.

Operation of Waiting Lists

13. Subject to any provisions regarding waiting lists in the LA's co-ordinated admission scheme, the Academy will operate a waiting list. Where in any year the Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate during the autumn term. This will be maintained by the Academy 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. From the date when the waiting list ceases to operate, all applications received will be considered on the basis of the oversubscription criteria.

14. Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out in this document. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Arrangements for Admitting Students to Other Year Groups, Including Replacing Any Students Who Have Left the Academy

15. Subject to any provisions in the LA's co-ordinated admission arrangements relating to applications submitted for years other than the normal year of entry, the Academy must consider all such applications and, if the year group applied for has a place available, admit the child. However, within the exceptional circumstances set out in paragraph 3.13 of the School Admissions Code, the Academy may refuse to admit a challenging child where there are places available on the grounds that admission would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources. The possibility of refusing to admit on this basis only applies to applications made outside the arrangements of the local in-year Fair Access Protocol. If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria shall apply. Parents whose application is turned down are entitled to appeal.

Appeals

16. Parents will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with admission decisions of the Academy. The Appeal Panel will be independent of the Academy. The arrangements for Appeals will be in line with the Code of Practice on School Admission Appeals published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families as it applies to Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools. The determination of the appeal panel will be made in accordance with the Code of Practice on School Admission Appeals and is binding on all parties. The Academy will prepare guidance for parents about the appeals process and provide parents with a named contact who can answer any enquiries parents may have about the process.

Annual Procedures for Determining Admission Arrangements

Consultation

17. Unless no change is proposed in its admissions arrangements, the Academy shall consult each year on its proposed admission arrangements.

18. The Academy will consult by 1st March:

- a) The LA
- b) Any other admission authorities for primary and secondary schools located within the relevant area for consultation set by the LA;
- c) Any other governing body for primary and secondary schools (as far as not falling within paragraph (b)) located within the relevant area for consultation.

Determination and Publication of Admission Arrangements

19. Following consultation, the Academy will consider comments made by those consulted. The Academy will then determine its admission arrangements by 15 April of the relevant year and notify those consulted what has been determined.

Publication of Admission Arrangements

20. The Academy will publish its admission arrangements each year once these have been determined by:

- a) Copies being sent to primary and secondary schools in the LA;
- b) Copies being sent to the offices of the LA;
- c) Copies being made available without charge on request from the Academy;
- d) Copies being sent to public libraries in the area of the LA for the purpose of being made available at such libraries for reference by parents and other persons.

21. The Published arrangements will set out:

- a) The name and address of the Academy and contact details;
- b) A summary of the admissions policy, including oversubscription criteria;
- c) A statement of any religious affiliation;
- d) Numbers of places and applications for those places in the previous year; and
- e) Arrangements for hearing appeals.

Representations about Admission Arrangements

22. Where any of those bodies that were consulted, or that should have been consulted, make representations to the Academy about its admission arrangements, the Academy will consider such representations before determining the admission arrangements. Where the Academy has determined its admission arrangements and notified all those bodies that it has consulted and any of those bodies object to the Academy's admission arrangements they can make representations to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State will consider the representation and in so doing will consult the Academy. Where he judges it appropriate, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to amend its admission arrangements.

23. Those consulted have the right to ask the Academy to increase its proposed published admissions number for any year. Where such a request is made, but agreement cannot be reached locally, they may ask the Secretary of State to direct the Academy to increase its proposed published admissions number. The Secretary of State will consult the Academy and will then determine the published admission number.

24. In addition to the provisions at paragraphs 23 and 24 above, the Secretary of State may direct changes to the Academy's proposed admission arrangements and, in addition to the provisions above, the Secretary of State may direct changes to the proposed published admissions number.

Proposed Changes to Admission Arrangements by the Academy after Arrangements Have Been Published

25. Once the admission arrangements have been determined for a particular year and published, the Academy will propose changes only if there is a major change of circumstances. In such cases, the Academy must notify those consulted under paragraph 19 above of the proposed variation and must then apply to the Secretary of State setting out:

- a) The proposed changes;
- b) Reasons for wishing to make such changes;
- c) Any comments or objections from those entitled to object.

Need to Secure Secretary of State's Approval for Changes to Admission Arrangements

26. The Secretary of State will consider applications from the Academy to change its admission arrangements only when the Academy has notified and consulted on the proposed changes as outlined at paragraph 19 above.

27. Where the Academy has consulted on proposed changes the Academy must secure the agreement of the Secretary of State before any such changes can be implemented. The Academy must seek the Secretary of State's approval in writing, setting out the reasons for the proposed changes and passing to him any comments or objections from other admission authorities/other persons.

28. The Secretary of State can approve, modify or reject proposals from the Academy to change its admission arrangements.

29. Records of applications and admissions shall be kept by the Academy for a minimum period of ten years and shall be open for inspection by the Secretary of State.

Notes

Twins/Triplets etc

If Places for twins/triplets etc cannot be offered, the family will be advised accordingly. (This also applies to siblings in the same year group). If places cannot be allocated to both or all of these children then the Academy will operate a system of random allocation to decide which child/children will receive an offer.

Late Applications

Where there are extenuating circumstances for an application being received after the final application date (and is back up with appropriate evidence), and it is before the date in which the Academy have established their list of students to be admitted, then it may be considered alongside others. Otherwise, applicants received after the last date will be considered after all others and, if necessary, placed on the waiting list in order according to the criteria.