

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Arrangements for the admission of students to Westminster Academy

- 1) This document sets out the admission arrangements for Westminster Academy. This document forms an Annex to the Funding Agreement between Westminster Academy and the Secretary of State. Any changes to the arrangements set out in this document, with the exception of setting a Published Admission Number higher than the agreed admission number for a specific year, must be approved in advance by the Secretary of State¹.
- 2) For the purpose of this Admissions Policy:
 - references in admission law and in the statutory Codes of Practice to admission authorities – shall be deemed to be references to the Governing Body of Westminster Academy;
 - references to ‘the LAA’ – shall be deemed to be references to the City of Westminster Local Authority Admissions; and
 - references to ‘the Admissions Forum’ – to be the City of Westminster Local Authority Admissions Forum.

Admission arrangements approved by the Secretary of State

- 3) The admission arrangements for Westminster Academy for the year 2015/2016 and, subject to any changes approved by the Secretary of State, for subsequent years are:
 - a) Westminster Academy has an agreed admission number of 180

¹ *In accordance, this document has been amended (i.e. Version 4) to reflect changes in the School Admissions Code and School Admissions Appeals Code, as set out in Section 85(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and **which came into force from 1 February 2012***

students. Westminster Academy will accordingly admit at least 180 students in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received. Where fewer than 180 applications are received, Westminster Academy will offer places to all those who have applied. Where the number of applications exceeds 180, applications will be considered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria in paragraphs 7 and 8.

- b) Westminster Academy may set a higher admission number as its Published Admission Number for any specific year.
- c) Students may be admitted above the Published Admission Number.² The decision to admit above the Published Admission Number may not be delegated by the Trust.

Process of application

4) Applications for Westminster Academy will be made on the Common Application Form of the LAA in which the applicant resides. Westminster Academy will use the following timetable for applications each year (exact dates may vary from year to year in accordance with the annual review) which will fit in with the common timetable agreed by the City of Westminster Admissions Forum:

- a) By 1 May – Westminster Academy will publish its admission arrangements (including oversubscription criteria) for the following September (i.e. in May 2014 for admission in September 2015). This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective students and their parents to visit the school. It will refer to the LAA and London Schools Admissions System, including use of the Common Application Form of the LAA in which the applicant resides and the closing date for applications within the LAA and London Schools Admissions System. Westminster Academy will also provide information to the LAA for inclusion in the composite prospectus, as required.

² The total number of students may not exceed 1175, as this is a planning condition of the Westbourne Green site development.

- b) **September/October** – Westminster Academy will provide opportunities for parents to visit Westminster Academy.
 - c) **31 October** – closing date for admissions applications.
 - d) **1st March** – offers of places notified in writing to parents by the LAA (i.e. National Offer Day) on behalf of Westminster Academy.
- 5) This timetable reflects the practice in the LAA and is intended to secure a co-ordinated approach to admissions for parents and students. Westminster Academy intends to be part of the co-ordinated admissions scheme.

Consideration of applications

- 6) Westminster Academy will consider all applications for places. Where fewer than 180 applications are received, Westminster Academy will offer places to all those who have applied.
- 7) Notwithstanding paragraph 6 above, Westminster Academy may refuse admission to particular applicants in cases where fewer than the Published Admission Number have applied. These are applicants who have been excluded from two (2) or more other schools and the ability to refuse admissions runs for a period of two (2) years from the last exclusion. Exclusions which took place before the child concerned reached compulsory school age do not count for this purpose. Nor do exclusions of children reinstated following a permanent exclusion nor exclusions of children with statements of special educational needs. In the circumstances described in this paragraph, however, the Secretary of State may direct Westminster Academy to admit such a student and that direction shall be binding on Westminster Academy.

Procedures where Westminster Academy is oversubscribed

- 8) Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the Published Admissions Number, applications will be considered for Year 7 against the criteria set out below. *After* the admission of students with Statements of Special Educational Needs where Westminster Academy is named on the Statement, the criteria will be applied in the order in which they are set out below:
- a) children in public care (looked after children) and previously looked after children. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).

Further references to previously looked after children in the Code mean such children who were adopted (or subject to residence orders or special guardianship orders) immediately following having been looked after

- b) children whose siblings currently attend Westminster Academy and who will continue to do so on the date of admission. The term 'sibling' means a full, step, half, adopted or fostered brother or sister, but not cousins
- c) children with exceptional medical, social or other needs for a place at Westminster Academy, where the application is supported by written specific professional advice as to why admission to Westminster Academy is necessary. The definition as to what constitutes exceptional needs within the scope of this provision is *{include this here }*.
- d) children of staff in either or both of the following circumstances:
 - where the member of staff has been continuously employed at the school for two (2) or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made; and/or
 - the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
- e) children who live closest to Westminster Academy, measured by the shortest walking distance. The distance which determines how close the student lives to Westminster Academy is the shortest walking distance along public highways and footpaths between the door to the student's permanent address and the nearest entrance to Westminster Academy's main building.

The student's permanent address is where he or she normally lives and sleeps and goes to school from. Proof of residence can be requested at any time throughout the admissions process. If false or misleading information is used to gain entry to Westminster Academy, the offer of a place will be withdrawn and the application cancelled

- 9) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 8 above, the Secretary of State may direct Westminster Academy to admit a named student to Westminster Academy on application from the LAA. The Secretary of State shall in such circumstances consult Westminster Academy before making such a direction and have regard to its comments.

Operation of waiting lists

- 10) Subject to any provisions contained in the London Schools Admissions System, where in any year Westminster Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate. This will be maintained by Westminster 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 for admission to Westminster Academy.
- 11) A child's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out in paragraph 8 above. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

Arrangements for Appeal Panels

- 12) Parents will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of Westminster Academy. The Appeal Panel will be independent of Westminster Academy and will be composed of three (3) members who will include:
 - at least one independent person who has no professional experience of education or personal experience of Westminster Academy, known as a 'lay member'; and
 - at least one independent person with experience in education.
- 13) Parents have the right to attend the Appeal Panel meeting in person and to make oral representations; that is, to clarify or supplement their written appeal. The parent may be accompanied by a friend, adviser or be represented. Parents may also bring an interpreter. Westminster Academy may also be represented at the Appeal Panel meeting.
- 14) The arrangements for appeals will be in line with the Code of Practice on School Admission Appeals published by the Department for Education.
- 15) Parents will normally have at least (20) days after notification of a place not being offered at Westminster Academy to lodge an appeal. The notification in writing will indicate the reasons for refusal of a place and of the right of appeal.
- 16) Parents wishing to appeal against an admission decision by Westminster Academy should write to the Clerk to the Appeal Panel at the address given in the admission decision letter from Westminster Academy. Other documentation may be submitted in support of an appeal and should be lodged with the Clerk to the Appeal Panel not less than seven (7) days

before the appeal hearing. The Appeal Panel will have the discretion to refuse to admit late evidence.

- 17) Any materials presented by Westminster Academy to the Clerk will be sent in advance to the parents and any materials presented by the parents will be sent in advance to Westminster Academy. The basic principle followed is that all information presented to the Clerk as part of the appeals process is available to all parties to the appeal.
- 18) Parents will be given at least ten (10) days notice of the appeal hearing, unless they agree to a shorter period of notice.
- 19) 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 five (5) 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.

Arrangements for admission to post 16 provision

- 20) The Westminster Academy will publish specific criteria in relation to minimum entrance requirements for the wide range of courses available based upon GCSE/GNVQ grades. The detailed information will be contained in the Sixth Form prospectus published on an annual basis.
- 21) There will be a right of appeal to the Appeals Panel using the process as set out in paragraphs 12-19 for unsuccessful applicants.

Arrangements for admitting students to other year groups, including to replace any students who have left Westminster Academy

- 22) If an application is made for a student to be admitted to Westminster Academy and the required year group is below the level of the Published Admission Number applicable to the age group, the student will be accepted.
- 23) Where a year group in Westminster Academy is at the level of the Published Admission Number applicable to that age group, Westminster Academy will operate a waiting list for those students who have applied for a place and been refused.
- 24) There will be a right of appeal to the Appeals Panel for unsuccessful applicants.

Annual procedures for determining admission arrangements

Consultation

- 25) Westminster Academy shall consult each year on any changes to its proposed admission arrangements. If no changes are made to the admission arrangements, they must be consulted on at least every seven (7) years. Westminster Academy will take part in the local admission forum for the Westminster area
- 26) Where changes are proposed, Westminster Academy will consult for a minimum period of eight (8) weeks between the 1st November and the 1st March, prior to the publication of admission arrangements, with:
- (i) Parents of children between the ages of 2 and 18;
 - (ii) Other persons in the relevant area who in the opinion of the admission authority have an interest;
 - (iii) All other admission authorities located within the relevant area; and
 - (iv) Whichever of the governing body and the local authority who are not the admission authority.

Determination of admission arrangements

- 27) Following consultation, Westminster Academy will consider comments made by those consulted. Westminster Academy will then determine its admission arrangements by 15th April of the relevant year.

Publication of admission arrangements

- 28) Westminster Academy will publish its admission arrangements by the 1st May of each year on its website.
- 29) Westminster Academy will send a copy of its admission arrangements to the LAA as soon as possible before 1st May.

Representations about admission arrangements

- 30) Any person or organisation that considers the admission arrangements unlawful can object to the Schools Adjudicator by the 30th June.
- 31) Westminster Academy must revise its arrangements as quickly as possible to give effect to the Schools Adjudicator's decision.

Proposed changes to admission arrangements by Westminster Academy after arrangements have been published

32) Once the admission arrangements have been determined and published, Westminster Academy will propose changes only if necessary to give effect to mandatory requirements of the School Admissions Code of Practice, admissions law, a determination of the Schools Adjudicator or a misprint in the admissions arrangements. Westminster Academy may propose variations where changes are considered necessary in view of a major change of circumstances. In these circumstances, Westminster Academy should contact the Education Funding Agency.

33) Records of applications and admissions shall be kept by Westminster Academy for a minimum period of ten (10) years and shall be open for inspection by the Secretary of State.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

34) The Governing Body of Westminster Academy will review this policy at least every year and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and published throughout Westminster Academy.

Version 2	
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