



# The Blue Coat School, Oldham

*(Proud to be part of the Cranmer Education Trust)*

## Admissions Policy For Year 7 Entry in 2024

Date of Next Review: Autumn 2023

Approved by the Admissions Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022

# **The Blue Coat School, Oldham - Admissions Policy for entry into Year 7 in September 2024**

## **Vision and Values**

The Blue Coat School Oldham is a Church of England Academy committed to Christian ecumenism and interfaith dialogue which serves Anglican families and a wide community of faiths across the region. The school welcomes applications from all families, of all faiths and none, wherever they live. The school does not have a catchment area.

## **Statutory Framework**

The Cranmer Education Trust (CET) is the Admission Authority for the school, with the administration and implementation of the policy being delegated to the local admissions committee of the school. The school is required to act in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021 and the Schools Admissions Appeals Code 2022, which are available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academy-admissions>. The admissions process is coordinated by Oldham Council (the Local Authority) and the school liaises with the Local Authority on admissions issues. The CET has consulted Manchester Diocesan Board of Education in drawing up the following arrangements for admissions, which include the criteria to be used to determine the allocation of places when the school is oversubscribed.

## **Applying for School Places**

Applications for a place in Year 7 in the normal admissions round each year must be made on the Local Authority's Common Application Form.

In addition to the Local Authority Form, all applicants should complete and return the school's **Supplementary Information Form** to the school, by the closing date of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023.

## **Admission Arrangements for Year 7 in September 2024**

The published admissions number (PAN) for admissions to Year 7 in September 2024 is **243**. If no more than 243 pupils apply, all applicants will be offered places.

The school welcomes applications for admissions from children of all faiths and none. If the school is oversubscribed, as a designated Church of England (CE) school, the Admissions Code 2021 allows Blue Coat to use faith-based oversubscription criteria. Some places are prioritised for Anglicans, some for other Christian denominations and some for other major world faiths that are members of the Interfaith Network.

## **Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan**

The school will admit all children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), naming the school. These admissions are made without reference to faith.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

If the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an EHCP naming the school, the decision upon which children will be offered places will be based on the following oversubscription criteria. **The school will admit children under 2 categories:**

1. **Category 1: Up to 183 places** (See Note 1) to applicants of the Anglican faith, in the order of priority out set below:
  - 1.1 **Children of the Anglican faith who are Looked After Children, or who are Previously Looked After Children (in Public Care) or Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After Children** (See Definitions).
  - 1.2 **Children whose parent/legal guardian provides evidence that the child and one parent/legal guardian are active members of the Anglican faith.**  
Active Membership of the Anglican faith is evidenced by:
    - (a) the attendance at public worship of the child and one parent/legal guardian.
    - (b) baptism of the child, or a service of dedication.

If there are more applicants in 1.2 than places available, priority will be given to those children who, with their parent/legal guardian, show the greatest commitment as evidenced by their attendance at weekly public worship in an Anglican Church over a period of up to 5 years. This is measured by allocating 1 point for each weekly attendance (Sunday to Saturday) by the parent/legal guardian and child, up to a maximum of 39 per year (to 31 August each year).

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, attendance at public worship for 2019-20 will only be counted up to 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Points will not be awarded for the period from 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 due to national restrictions imposed on churches and places of worship.

For the for the academic year 2020-21, attendance will not be counted due to the impact of Covid restrictions. Counting of attendance recommenced on 31st October 2021.

The maximum points that can be awarded for the year 1st September 2021 to 31st August 2022 will be 33 to proportionately reflect the reduction in months. These changes are reflected in the attendance table on the Supplementary Information Form.

**In addition**, 5 points will be allocated for the baptism of the child into the Church of England, or a service of dedication, before 31 August 2023. Confirmation of baptism or a service of dedication must be provided by the rector/vicar/priest-in-charge or church official.

The minimum points score for eligibility under 1.1 is 5. The minimum points score for eligibility under 1.2 is 15.

2. **Category 2: Up to 60 places** (See Notes 2 and 3 below) to applicants from

- other Christian churches. A “Christian Church” means a church which is Designated under the Ecumenical Relations Measure 2018, nationally by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, or locally by a Diocesan Bishop (See Definitions).
- **and** applications from other Major World Faiths that are members of the Interfaith Network (See Definitions).
- **and** applicants of no faith

**in the priority order set out below.**

2.1 **Children not of the Anglican faith who are Looked After Children, or who are Previously Looked After Children (in Public Care) or Internationally Adopted Previously Looked After Children** (See Definitions).

2.2 Up to **30 places** (See Notes 2, 3 and 4 overleaf) to applicants who are active members of other Christian churches. (See Definitions). Active membership of these churches is evidenced by:

- (a) the attendance at public worship of the child and one parent/legal guardian.
- (b) baptism of the child or the denomination’s equivalent of making a commitment (e.g. a service of dedication or Salvationist “wrapping in the flag”).

If there are more applicants in 2.2 than places available, priority will be given to those children who, with one parent/legal guardian, show the greatest commitment as evidenced by their attendance at weekly public worship within their church over a period of up to 5 years. This is measured by allocating 1 point for each weekly attendance (Sunday to Saturday) by one parent/legal guardian and child, up to a maximum of 39 per year (to 31 August each year).

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, attendance at public worship for 2019-20 will only be counted up to 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020. Points will not be awarded for the period from 18<sup>th</sup> March 2020 due to national restrictions imposed on churches and places of worship.

For the for the academic year 2020-21, attendance will not be counted due to the impact of Covid restrictions. Counting of attendance recommenced on 31st October 2021.

The maximum points that can be awarded for the year 1st September 2021 to 31st August 2022 will be 33 to proportionately reflect the reduction in months. These changes are reflected in the attendance table on the Supplementary Information Form.

**In addition**, 5 points will be allocated for the baptism of the child or a service of dedication into the denomination (or the denomination's equivalent of making a commitment) before the 31 August 2023. Confirmation of baptism (or a service of dedication, or the denomination's equivalent) must be provided by the minister/leader of worship.

There is no minimum points score required for eligibility under Category 2.1. The minimum points score for eligibility under Category 2.2 is 15.

2.3 Up to **30 places** (see Notes 2, 3 and 4 overleaf) to applicants who are members of another Major World Faith that is a member of the Interfaith Network (See Definitions).

As patterns of worship vary between faiths, commitment is evidenced by the attestation of the leader of worship. If there are more applicants than places available, allocation of places in this category will be first to children of staff employed at The Blue Coat School (See Definitions) and then by random allocation (See Definitions).

2.4 **Any Other Children.** If places remain in Category 2 after the admission of children under Categories 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3, the remaining places will be allocated to any other children seeking places at the school. If there are more applicants than places, allocation will be first to children of staff employed at The Blue Coat School (See Definitions) and then by random allocation (See Definitions).

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## Notes

**Note 1:** This number will be adjusted downwards by the number of any children of the Anglican faith, who have been admitted as a result of having an EHCP naming the school.

**Note 2:** The number of places available for Category 2 will be adjusted downwards by the number of any children not of the Anglican faith who have been admitted as a result of having an EHCP naming the school. The places remaining will be divided equally between Category 2.2 and Category 2.3. If there is an odd number, the final place will be deducted from Category 2.3.

**Note 3:** If all the places available under Category 1 are not filled by children of the Anglican faith, the number of places available in Category 2 will be increased by the number of unfilled places from Category 1, with the places shared equally between Category 2.2 and 2.3. If there is an odd number, the final place will be added to Category 2.2.

**Note 4:** The number of places available for allocation under Categories 2.2 and 2.3 will be adjusted downwards to take account of the number of any pupils allocated under Category 2.1. Half the number of places will be deducted from Category 2.2 and half will be deducted from Category 2.3. If there is an odd number, the final place will be deducted from Category 2.2.

## Tie Breaks

### **Categories 1.2 and 2.2**

Where 2 or more children achieve the same points within each of these Categories, 1.2 and 2.2 the following tie-break(s) will be used:

(a) **Children of staff employed at The Blue Coat School** (See Definitions)

If a further tie break needs to be applied between the children of staff employed at The Blue Coat School, staff children who have a sibling (See Definitions) attending the school as of 1 September 2024 will be admitted first.

If a further tie break needs to be applied between children of staff with siblings attending the school, this will be geographical proximity, using a straight-line measurement between the home (See Definitions) postcode and the school postcode.

If a final tie break is needed, this will be by random allocation (See Definitions).

(b) **Non-Staff Children who have a sibling** (See Definitions) attending the school as of 1 September 2024 will be admitted next.

If a further tie break needs to be applied between non-staff children with siblings attending the school (See Definitions), this will be geographical proximity, using a straight-line measurement between the home (See Definitions) postcode and the school postcode.

(c) If all children with siblings attending the school can be admitted within this category, **geographical proximity using a straight-line measurement between the home (See Definitions) postcode and the school postcode** will be used as a tie-break between the remaining applicants in the group.

(d) If a final tie break is needed, this will be by **random allocation** (See Definitions).

### **Categories 2.3 and 2.4**

If there are more applicants than places available, places in each of these categories will be allocated first to children of staff employed at The Blue Coat School (See Definitions) and then by random allocation (See Definitions).

## Definitions

i) **Children in Public Care/Previously Looked After Children (LAC/PLAC/IAPLAC)**

This includes any "looked after child", "previously looked after children" and any child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. 'Looked after' means that the child was

- (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.

This criteria also includes looked after children and all previously looked after children who appear (to the admission authority) to have been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society, and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

- ii) The **Responsible Authority** is the Local Authority which has the care responsibility for the Looked After Child.
- ii) **Random Allocation.** This process is electronic and is supervised by a responsible person independent of the school. It is a means of putting applications into an order that is entirely by chance and has no element of bias in the selection so that everybody has an equal chance of being selected.
- iii) A **Parent/Legal Guardian** is any person who has parental responsibility (or has been awarded Legal Guardianship by a court) for the care of the child.
- iv) The Cranmer Education Trust has defined "**siblings**" as full, step, half, foster and adopted brothers and sisters living at the same address at the time of submitting the application.
- v) For the purposes of these admission arrangements '**Christian Church**' means a church which is Designated under the Ecumenical Relations Measure 2018, nationally by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, or locally by the Diocesan Bishop. This includes:
  - Member churches of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland ([www.cbti.org.uk](http://www.cbti.org.uk))
  - Churches affiliated to the Evangelical Alliance ([www.eauk.org](http://www.eauk.org))
  - Partner churches of Affinity ([www.affinity.org.uk](http://www.affinity.org.uk))
  - Churches which are members of the Fellowship of Evangelical Churches ([www.fiec.org.uk](http://www.fiec.org.uk))
- vi) **Other Major World Faiths** are defined as Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism and Buddhism who are members of the Interfaith Network. A list of members can be found at [www.interfaith.org.uk](http://www.interfaith.org.uk).
- vii) **Home** is defined as the place where the child wakes up for the majority of Monday to Friday mornings.
- viii) **A member of staff employed at The Blue Coat School** is defined as someone who must have been permanently employed for a minimum of two years or was recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage. This must be verified by the Headteacher.
- ix) An **EHCP** (Education Health and Care Plan) is a legal document that outlines a child or young person's special educational, health and social care needs and the provision a Local Authority must put in place to help them.

## **Exceptional Circumstances (Faith-Based Places)**

The local admissions committee will consider applications where exceptional circumstances apply. The local admissions committee shall determine whether the application sets out any exceptional circumstances that have limited or prevented attendance at public worship with a parent or guardian.

In this section, exceptional circumstance means:

- a) not of a trivial or moderate nature, such that can be foreseen and be reasonably expected as part of day-to-day life.
- b) must have a substantial detrimental impact on the child's ability to demonstrate a commitment to the faith through attendance at public worship with a parent or guardian.
- c) must be the cause of the limit and/or prevention of attendance at public worship with a parent or guardian; and
- d) must render attendance at public worship with a parent or guardian unachievable.

The local admissions committee will assess whether a commitment to the faith would have been demonstrated by attendance at public worship with a parent or guardian, *but for* the exceptional circumstance. For instance, where a parent or guardian has a serious illness that prevents them from accompanying their child to public worship, this may be considered to be an exceptional circumstance.

When making its determination, the local admissions committee will require evidence to support the application for exceptional circumstances. Trustees shall consider all relevant information and evidence submitted with the application including, but not limited to:

- medical reports or letters
- reports or letters from social care professionals
- statements from clergy or religious leaders setting out attendance with an alternative family member and/or friend

If the local admissions committee are satisfied that exceptional circumstances have been made out they will determine the number of points to be awarded for the period that exceptional circumstances applied, up to the maximum of 39 in any one year.

The application for exceptional circumstances can be made through the supplementary information form.

## **Temporary Restrictions on public worship resulting from Covid-19 after 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021**

In the event that during the period 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 the church has been closed for public worship and has not provided alternative premises for that worship; or the church's issued capacity is not available to all its congregation because they have not been able to book one of the available seats during public worship:

- i) the incumbent or authorised person is asked to record that information on the Supplementary Information Form (Section B – Anglican Faith and C – all other Christian denominations, as appropriate).
- ii) this information will be fully considered by the admissions committee for the school. The level of attendance will be adjusted by looking at attendance prior to closure/part closure and then again from when the church re-opened fully for public worship.



For example: if in previous qualifying years the applicant and parent/legal guardian had attended for the maximum counted for the purposes of this policy, i.e. 75% of the weeks of the year, it will be presumed that they would have attended for 75% of the weeks of closure/partial closure and so on.

This calculation of presumption will be taken into account as part of the calculation of attendance for the period from 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022 by the Admissions Authority for the school.

### **Waiting List**

Where there are more applications than places, the oversubscription criteria will be used. Children who are not admitted will have their name placed on a waiting list. The names on this waiting list will be in the order resulting from the application of the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list will be maintained until 31 December in any given year.

Late applicants for the school will be slotted into the order according to the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list for all categories where randomisation applies will be re-randomised in line with any legal requirements. Thus, it is possible for a child who moves into the area later to have a higher priority than one already on the waiting list. If a place becomes available within the admission number, the child whose name is at the top of the list will be offered a place. This is not dependent on whether an appeal has been submitted.

### **Applications for admission outside the normal age group**

Parents/legal guardians are entitled to apply to the Trust for entry of their child into a year group outside of the normal age specific group. For example, if a child works at a higher ability than would be expected at Year 7, parents/legal guardians may apply to the Trust for entry of their child into Year 8. Equally, a child may have experienced problems such as ill health which means they would be better suited to a lower age group.

All applications should be sent to the Clerk to Trustees at the Trust. These can be submitted in writing by post or electronically by e-mail. Applications must be supported by evidence. The evidence required is dependent on the nature of the application made. The local admissions committee has the delegated authority from the Cranmer Education Trust to make decisions on requests for admissions outside of the normal age group. Decisions will be made on the available evidence before the local admissions committee and in the best interests of the child. The local admissions committee will take account of the following information:

- the views of the parents/legal guardians.
- the views of the Headteacher at the school.
- any applicable medical history and views obtained by the parents/legal guardians from a medical professional(s).
- whether the child has previously been educated outside of the normal age group.
- any applicable information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; and
- if the child would have fallen into a lower age group had they not been born prematurely (as applicable).

Decisions will be issued to parents/legal guardians setting out the local admissions committee's reasons.

If the application is granted and has been made during the normal admissions round, the child will be still subject to the school's oversubscription criteria and will not be given any preference beyond that set out in the oversubscription criteria.

If the application is granted and it is for in-year admission, subject to any waiting list or space being available, the child will be admitted to the age group applied to.

If the application has been rejected the child will only be able to apply for admission to the normal age group and be subject to the applicable process whether admission is sought through the normal admissions round or in-year.

Parents/legal guardians have the right to appeal to a refusal to admit their child (see further details below). However, if parents/legal guardians are offered a place for their child but not in the preferred age group there is no right of appeal.

### **Applications for in-year admission**

All applications for in-year admission must be submitted in writing to the school (please telephone in the first instance). If you are an active member of your faith, you will also be asked to complete a Supplementary Information Form. If a place is offered and accepted, the school will inform the Local Authority.

### **Appeals**

Where the school is unable to offer a place because the school is oversubscribed, parents/legal guardians have the right to appeal to an independent appeal panel, set up under the School Standards and Framework Act, 1998, as amended by the Education Act, 2002 and subject to the School Admissions Appeals Code 2022. **Parents/legal guardians should notify the Clerk to the Governors at the school within 14 days of receiving the letter refusing a place.** Parents/legal guardians will have the opportunity to submit their case to the panel in writing and also to attend in order to present their case. Parents/legal guardians will normally receive 10 school days' notice of the place and time of the hearing. Further information about any appeal will be provided by the independent clerk to the appeals panel. Details about the appeals process can be found on the school website.

Please note that this right of appeal against the Trust's decision does not prevent you from making an appeal in respect of any other school.

### **Fraudulent applications**

Where the Trust discovers that a child has been awarded a place as the result of an intentionally misleading application from a parent/legal guardian (for example a false claim of involvement in a place of worship) which effectively denies a place to a child with a stronger claim, then the Trust may withdraw the offer of the place. Where an offer is withdrawn based on misleading information, the application will be considered afresh, and a right of appeal offered if a place is refused.

### **The Cranmer Education Trust Privacy Notice**

In making an application for admission to the Blue Coat School Oldham, parents/legal guardians provide personal, sensitive information in relation to their child and themselves. This information will be stored in accordance with the School's privacy notice; a copy of which can be found at [www.blue-coat.org/policies](http://www.blue-coat.org/policies).



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