

Admissions Policy

Implementation: September 2008

Review: Spring 2010

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the admission arrangements for Oasis Academy Coulsdon, throughout this document referred to as “the Academy”. These arrangements are without prejudice to the provisions of Annex B in the Master Funding Agreement (relating to Statemented students).
- 1.2 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 State.
- 1.3 Oasis Academy Coulsdon is a non-selective school open to pupils of all religious faiths or those of no faith.

2 Code of practice

- 2.1 The Academy will comply with all relevant provisions of the statutory codes of practice (the School Admissions Code of Practice 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.
- 2.2 Reference in the codes to admission authorities shall be deemed to be references to Oasis Community Learning. References to “the LEA” shall be deemed to be references to the Coulsdon Local Education Authority and references to “the Admissions Forum” to be to the Coulsdon LEA Admissions Forum. In particular, the Academy will take part in the Admissions Forum set up by the LEA and have regard to its advice; and will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by the LEA.
- 2.3 Notwithstanding these arrangements, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to admit a named student to the Academy on application from an LEA. Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult the Academy.

3 Admission arrangements approved by the Secretary of State

The admission arrangements for the Academy for the year 2007/2008 and, subject to any changes approved by the Secretary of State, for subsequent years are:

- 3.1 The Academy has an agreed admission number of 180 students. The Academy will accordingly admit at least 180 students in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received.
- 3.2 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 at paragraph 12.2 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.

Admissions procedures

4 Application process

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 The Academy will use 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:

- 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 2006 for admission in September 2007). 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
- September/October - The Academy will provide opportunities for parents to visit the Academy
- October/November - CAF to be completed and returned to the LA to administer
- November/December - LA sends applications to Academy
- January - Academy sends list of students to be offered places to LA
- February - LA applies agreed scheme for own schools, informing other LAs of offers to be made to their residents
- 1st March offers made to parents

5 Consideration of applications

- 5.1 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.

6 Procedures where the Academy is oversubscribed

- 6.1 Where the number of applications for admission is greater than the published admissions number, applications will be considered against the criteria set out below, in the order they appear.
- 1 Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs where the Academy is named on the Statement (under Section 324 of the 1996 Education Act).
 - 2 Children in public care (Looked after Children) at the time of application.
 - 3 Children who have specific medical needs, social needs or special needs where the application is supported by written specific professional advice as to why admission to the Academy is necessary. The OASIS COMMUNITY LEARNING Board will make the decisions related to such applications.
 - 4 Siblings of pupils who will be attending the Academy and living at the same address on the date when the applicant would be admitted. The term "sibling" means a full, step, half, adopted or fostered brother or sister, but not cousins. The Academy reserves the right to ask for proof of relationship.
 - 5 Children who live the nearest distance from the Academy. The distance, which determines how close the child lives to the Academy, is the shortest walking distance along public highways and footpaths between the door to the child's permanent address and the main entrance to the Academy. The child's permanent address is where he or she normally lives and sleeps and from where they go to school. Proof of residence can be requested at any time throughout the admissions process. 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.

Please note

Should there be more applicants from criterion 4 than places available, then criterion 5 will be used to determine who will be allocated a place.

7 Operation of waiting lists

- 7.1 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 until a month after the admission date. 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.

7.2 Children's position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out in paragraph 6.1.

7.3 Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

8 Arrangements for appeals panels

8.1 Parents will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision 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 Education and Skills as it applies to Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools. (Appendix 1)

8.2 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 should prepare guidance for parents about how the appeals process will work and provide parents with a named contact who can answer any enquiries parents may have about the process.

9 Arrangements for admission to post 16 provision

9.1 The Academy will publish specific criteria in relation to minimum entrance requirements for the range of courses available based upon GCSE grades or other measures of prior attainment. The sixth form will make provision for 250 students in total.

9.2 There will be a right of appeal to the Independent Appeals Panel for unsuccessful applicants.

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

10.1 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.

10.2 Families should be directed to apply directly to the Academy.

10.3 A designated number of 180 students applies to Year Groups 8 to 11.

10.4 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.

11 Arrangements for admission of students as the Academy builds to its full capacity

11.1 The Academy will open on 1st September 2008 with a Published Admission Number relating solely to pupils in Year 7. The Academy will admit up to 180 pupils to Year 7 in subsequent years as the school builds up to full capacity.

11.2 The sixth form will open for students in Year 12 from September 2009 and for students in Year 13 from September 2010, following consultation with those bodies listed in 12.2

12 Annual procedures for determining admission arrangements

- 12.1 The Academy shall consult each year on its proposed admission arrangements.
- 12.2 The Academy will consult by 1 March:
- The LA
 - Any other admission authorities for primary and secondary schools located within the relevant area for consultation set by the LA
 - Any other governing body for primary and secondary schools (as far as not falling within the above) located within the relevant area for consultation
- 12.3 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.

13 Publication of admission arrangements

- 13.1 The Academy will publish its admission arrangements each year once these have been determined, by:
- Copies being sent to the offices of the LA for distribution to primary and secondary schools as appropriate
 - Copies being made available without charge on request from the Academy
 - Copies being sent to public libraries in the area of the LA for the purposes of being made available at such libraries for reference by parents and other persons
- 13.2 The published arrangements will set out:
- The name and address of the Academy and contact details
 - A summary of the admissions policy, including oversubscription criteria
 - A statement of any religious affiliation
 - Numbers of places and applications for those places in the previous year
 - Arrangements for hearing appeals

14 Representations about admission arrangements

- 14.1 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.
- 14.2 Where the Academy has determined its admission arrangements and notified all those bodies whom 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.
- 14.3 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.
- 14.4 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.

15 Proposed changes to admission arrangements by the Academy after arrangements

have been published

- 15.1 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.
- 15.2 In such cases, the Academy must notify those consulted under paragraph 12.2 above of the proposed variation and must then apply to the Secretary of State setting out:
- The proposed changes
 - Reasons for wishing to make such changes
 - Any comments or objections from those entitled to object

16 Need to secure Secretary of State's approval for changes to admission arrangements

- 16.1 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 in 12.2
- 16.2 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.
- 16.3 The Secretary of State can approve, modify or reject proposals from the Academy to change its admission arrangements.

17 Admission records

- 17.1 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.

Appendix 1 Admission appeals procedure

Oasis Community Learning Admission Appeals Information

Admission Authority

- 1 Oasis Community Learning is the Admission Authority for its Academies. Therefore, Oasis Community Learning is required to make arrangements for the hearing of appeals against decisions not to offer a place to a child at the Academy.

Admission Appeals

- 2 Parents have a right to appeal in the event that their application for a place in an Academy is unsuccessful. Appeals must be lodged with the Clerk to the Appeal Panel by 31st March. Appeals are normally heard in April.

Late Appeals

- 3 Where an appeal is submitted after 31st March, it will normally only be considered where the parent can demonstrate that there was a reasonable cause for the appeal not to be made on time. The Clerk will write to the parents advising them whether or not a late appeal is to be heard in the light of the circumstances described by the parents.

Appeal Panel

- 4 Admission appeals are heard by an independent Appeal Panel of three members,

established by Oasis Community Learning. At least one member of the Panel is a lay member; that is, someone without personal experience in the management of any school or the provision of education in any school. At least one member has experience in education; that is, someone who is acquainted with educational conditions in the area or who is a parent of a registered pupil at a school. One member acts as Chair of the Panel.

- 5 No one may be a member of the Appeal Panel if they were party to the decision not to admit the child about whom the appeal is concerned, or took part in any discussions about how the decision was reached.
- 6 Parents should not attempt to discuss matters relating to their appeal with any member of the Appeal Panel prior to the meeting.

The Powers of the Appeal Panel

- 7 The Appeal Panel's decision is binding on the Admission Authority. If the Panel upholds the appeal presented by the parents, the child must be admitted to the Academy. Once an Appeal Panel has considered an appeal, it is not required to hear a second appeal in respect of the same child for admission to the Academy in the same academic year.
- 8 An Appeal Panel decision can only be overturned by the Courts, where the parents or Admission Authority are successful in applying for Judicial Review of that decision.
- 9 The Appeal Panel cannot hear complaints or objections on the wider aspects of admission policies and practice. The Appeal Panel cannot change the Academy's admission criteria. Therefore, the Panel is unlikely to uphold an appeal where the Academy has applied the admission criteria in a reasonable fashion. The Academy's admission criteria are attached as an Annex to this note.

Action prior to the Appeal Panel meeting

- 10 Parents have the right to attend the Appeal Panel meeting and to present their appeal orally to the Panel. However, in addition, parents may provide their appeal in writing with any supporting evidence to the Clerk to the Appeal Panel prior to the meeting. Written material received seven days before the date of the appeal meeting will be sent to the Appeal Panel members prior to the meeting so that they can study the material in advance.
- 11 The Academy may also present its representations and evidence to the Clerk at least seven days before the date of the appeal meeting so that they may be read in advance by the Appeal Panel members.
- 12 Any materials presented by the Academy will be sent in advance to the parents and any materials presented by the parents will be sent in advance to the 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.

Notice of the Appeal Panel meeting

- 13 Parents will receive written notice at least 14 days before the date their appeal will be heard unless the parent agrees to a shorter notice period.

Representation

- 14 Parents are encouraged 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. In all circumstances where the parents bring along someone else, the parents should

advise the Clerk at least 3 working days prior to the meeting of the name of the other person attending and the capacity in which they are attending.

The Appeal Panel meeting

- 15 The Appeal Panel hearing is in two parts. Firstly, the Academy's Presenting Officer presents the case that to admit any more pupils would prejudice the provision of efficient education or use of resources. This part of the hearing may involve a number of parents together. The parents are given the opportunity to question the Presenting Officer. Secondly, the parents are given the opportunity to present to the Appeal Panel individually (without other parents present). The Chair of the Appeal Panel ensures that the stages of the second part of the meeting take the following order:
- a The parents present their case to the Panel.
 - b The Presenting Officer is given the opportunity to question the parents.
 - c The Presenting Officer sums up the Admission Authority's case.
 - d The parents sum up their case.
- 16 The Appeal Panel members may ask questions at any time if they require clarification of what is being said or if they need information in order to reach a decision.

After the Appeal Panel meeting

- 17 The written decision of the Appeal Panel will normally be sent to the parents by the Clerk within seven days of the meeting.

Non-attendance at the Appeal Panel hearing

- 18 If the parents provide the Appeals Administrator with their telephone number, the Appeals Administrator will inform the parent of the date and time of the Appeal Panel hearing both by letter and by telephone.
- 19 If through unforeseeable circumstances, the parents are unable to attend the hearing on the day, they must telephone the Appeals Administrator immediately and give the reason for the non-attendance. The parents will be asked if they want the appeal to go ahead in their absence. If they wish to seek another appointment, the matter will be referred to the Chairman of the Appeal Panel who will decide, based on the parents' reason for non-attendance, whether to hear the appeal in the absence of the parents or defer consideration to a subsequent hearing.
- 20 Where parents fail to attend on two occasions, the Appeal Panel will consider the appeal in the absence of the parents.