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Admission Arrangements Academic Year 2025/26

Admission to all state funded schools is governed by the School Admissions Code 2014 (**Code**). Under the code, the Academy Trust responsible for a school is its, 'Admission Authority' and has a legal duty to formally determine the, 'admission arrangements' for each year's intake in accordance with the requirements of the Code.

Cotham School's Published Admission Number is 243.

Applications for Year 7 should be made on the 'home' Local Authority application form and submitted to that Local Authority. If you live outside the City of Bristol and apply for Cotham School for September 2025 your home Local Authority will inform Bristol of your application on your behalf.

It is very important that your application is received by midnight on **31 October 2024**. Late applications are not considered until all the on-time applications have been processed and it may not be possible to offer you a place at your preferred school, even where you have very strong reasons for attending that school, if all the available places have already been offered to on time applicants.

All applications are considered equally against the criteria and a place will be offered at the highest preference possible.

Applications should be made online at www.bristol.gov.uk/schooladmissions follow the link to the online application form. Paper application forms are available but many parents and carers find it easier and quicker to apply electronically using the online facility.

In addition, applicants applying under criteria 2 below must complete the Supplementary Information Form, available from the school office, and return it to the school.

Students with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are admitted under separate statutory procedures which are managed by the candidate's home Local Authority, not under a school's admission arrangements or this policy. Parents of candidates with an EHCP should therefore liaise with the candidate's home Local Authority's SEN team if they want the School to be named in the candidate's EHCP.

After places have been allocated for children with an Education Health & Care Plan naming the school, the remaining places are allocated in the following order of priority:

1. Looked after and previously looked after children

A 'looked after child' is a child who is:

- In the care of a Local Authority, or
- 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,
- or was in state care outside England, and ceased to be so because they were adopted.

2. Children of staff

Where the member of staff is employed directly by the school at the time at which the application for the admission to the school is made.

3. Siblings living in the area of priority¹

Where there are siblings of statutory school age in attendance at the preferred school and who will still be on roll in the year of entry and where the home address is within the designated areas of first priority.

4. Geography

Children living within the school's designated area of priority.

5. Siblings living out of area

Where there are siblings of statutory school age in attendance at the preferred school and who will still be on roll in the year of entry and where the home address is outside the designated area of first priority.

6. Geography – out of area children

Children living outside the area of first priority and closest to the school as measured in a direct line from the home address to the school.

You should be aware that it is not always possible to allocate places to all children who live within a school's area of priority and/or all children living within the school's joint area who request places.

Siblings

Sibling refers to brother or sister, half brother or sister, step brother or sister, or a child of the parent/carer's partner where the child for whom a place is being sought is living in the same family unit at the same address.

Pupils will not be considered as a sibling link where the older child is attending the school as a Year 12 or Year 13 student in the year of entry.

Home Address

The child's permanent home address, where he or she resides with a person with parental responsibility, or with a parent (as defined in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996). It is the address where the child spends the majority of their time. Documentary evidence may be required to confirm a child's home address. If a child regularly lives at more than one address the admission authority will have to reach a conclusion about which address should be counted as the main address when allocating school places. This will normally be the address where the Child Benefit is paid and where the child is registered with a doctor.

Home to school distance

Home to school distances will be measured in a direct line from a point on the home address as held by the Local Authority to a central point within the main school building using the Local Authority's computerised mapping system.

Tie-breaks

Where there are more applications than there are places remaining within a particular category, the direct line distance from home to school will be used as a tie-break. When the furthest distance to qualify for a place relates to a household containing two or more children for whom applications are being made (e.g. twins), places will be offered to both children.

¹ For areas of priority see <https://maps.bristol.gov.uk/pinpoint/> select the, 'Education' tab on the left, then check the boxes for, 'Secondary school areas of first priority', 'Secondary school areas of second priority' and, 'Secondary schools'.

Where two or more children live in a flat or other multi-home dwelling and it is not possible to determine which applicant lives closest to the preferred school as measured in a direct line from the building to the school; the available place(s) will be allocated by drawing lots. Any offer of a place determined by random allocation will be overseen by someone independent from the school. Distances will be measured using a computerised mapping system.

Special Educational Needs / Education, Health and Care Plan

Students with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) are admitted under separate statutory procedures which are managed by the candidate's home Local Authority, not under a school's admission arrangements or this policy. Parents of candidates with an EHCP should therefore liaise with the candidate's home Local Authority's SEN team if they want the School to be named in the candidate's EHCP.

Where the school is named in an EHCP, they must be admitted. Where this happens in the normal admission round (i.e. in September), they will be allocated places before other candidates, reducing the number of places left within the published admission number (PAN). At other times, they will be admitted, even where this means the PAN will be exceeded.

Late applications

Any application received after the closing date will be regarded as a 'late application'. This includes any change of preference which is received after the closing date even if the original application was an on-time application.

For oversubscribed community schools "late applications" submitted after 31 October 2023 but before 1 September 2024 will be considered together with original applicants refused a preference who have lodged a formal appeal or have asked to remain on the waiting list. In all cases the admissions criteria will be used to determine the allocation of any places that may become available within the school's admission number. Any late applicants refused a preference will be informed that they can lodge a formal appeal and/or remain on the waiting list.

Admissions during the school year

'In-Year' school applications are processed on behalf of the school by Bristol City Council School Admissions. Please make an on-line or paper application to www.bristol.gov.uk/Schooladmissions

Parents/carers may express preferences for up to three schools in ranked order. The Admission Authority will consider the application in line with its published admission arrangements. If it is not possible to offer a place you may place your child's name on the waiting list or appeal to an independent appeal panel for a place.

Requests for Admission Outside Normal Age Group

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).

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 School's Admission 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.

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.

The Admission 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 will also take into account the views of the Headteacher of the School and, where provided, 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.

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 Clerk to the Admission Committee. This form is available to download on the School's website or in hard copy from the School's main office.

In all cases, the Admission Committee 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.

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 Admission Committee 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.

Approved by Governing Body of Cotham School 7 December 2023