



Thorns Collegiate Academy Admissions Policy 2022-23

Procedures for Admission

The Admissions Authority for Thorns Collegiate Academy (TCA) is the Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust which will comply with the national co-ordinated admissions scheme. TCA has a Published Admissions Number (PAN) of 200 students.

As part of the national co-ordinated admissions arrangements across all Admissions Authorities, parents MUST complete an online registration form provided by their Local Authority by 31 October 2021. In completing this form TCA must be chosen as one of the 6 preferences on the LA form.

Preference forms received after the closing date will be considered where the Local Authority identifies that exceptional circumstances apply.

Preference forms received after the places have been offered will be kept on file and form the basis of the 'Applications to Transfer to Year 7'. Those who are offered a place at the Academy will be informed on 1 March 2022 by the home Local Authority.

Those not offered admission will be informed on 1 March 2022 and will be offered a place at an alternative school by the home Local Authority.

Admission of children outside their normal age group

Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is having or has experienced problems such as ill health and the Academy Trust will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

Parents should submit a request to the school with their application specifying the age of the child, which year group they wish him/her to be admitted and the reason for the request.

Procedures when the Academy is oversubscribed

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

- A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special

guardianship order including those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.¹

- Siblings (brother and sister at the Academy at the time of admission). Sibling is defined as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters
- Thereafter, on the basis of distance between their home address and the main entrance to the Academy. (Distance will be calculated according to a straight-line measurement between the applicant's home and the main entrance to the Academy as measured by an external consultant)

NB: Children with an Education Health Care Plan naming the Academy will be admitted before other applicants.

Operation of waiting list and appeals

If the Academy is oversubscribed and children have been refused admission because other applicants have a higher priority for admission under the published admission criteria, then those applicants who are unsuccessful may request to be placed on the waiting list. This will be maintained by the Local Authority. Children placed on the waiting list will be ranked in accordance with the Academy's published admissions criteria. For Dudley schools, waiting lists will normally operate until the 31 August 2023.

Parents will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision. The arrangements for appeals will be in line with the Code on School Admission Appeals published by the Department for Education. The determination of the Appeals Panel will be made in accordance with the Code on School Admission Appeals and is binding on all parties. (For further information about appeals, see Appendix A)

Collegiate Academy Trust Admission Criteria and Process for In Year Applications for Thorns Collegiate Academy

All in year admissions are managed by Dudley Local Authority. Applications for places at TCA should be made directly to the Dudley Local Authority.

If several requests for places in the same year are received at the same time, places will be offered according to the criteria set out below:

- A 'looked after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, child arrangements, or special

¹ A looked after child is a child who is (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 as defined by section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making the application for a school place

guardianship order including those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.²

- Siblings (brother and sister at the Academy at the time of admission, not including Sixth Form). Sibling is defined as children who live as brother or sister in the same house, including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters
- Thereafter, on the basis of distance between their home address and the main entrance to the Academy. (Distance will be calculated according to a straight-line measurement between the applicant's home and the main entrance to the Academy as measured by an external consultant)

NB: Children with an Education Health Care Plan naming the Academy will be admitted before other applicants

The Academy does not maintain waiting lists for in year applications.

Appendix A

Appeals

The Governing Body of TCA has contracted the appeals function to Dudley Local Authority (LA).

If you are unhappy with the school allocated to you (even if it was your first preference) and you wish to appeal, contact the LA's Admission and Appeals Service for an appeal form. Before deciding to appeal, you may wish to contact the Advisory Centre for Education (0808 800 5793) who will provide you with free, impartial advice.

If you choose to exercise your right of appeal, arrangements will be made for you to attend an appeal hearing. The Appeals Panel is independent of the LA and TCA and is arranged by Democratic Services of the Council. The Panel will consist of 3 or 5 members. There will also be someone representing TCA (this will be a LA Officer) and a clerk from Democratic Services in attendance. At the meeting, you will be invited to say why you would like your child to go to TCA rather than the one offered. The LA officer will explain why a place at TCA has been refused.

You cannot appeal for TCA if you did not list it on your common application form. The LA recommends that you accept the school that has been offered to you even if you decide to appeal for TCA. By accepting the school offered, you will guarantee a school place for your child. If you refuse the place, you are likely to be reducing the options which may be available to you. Accepting the place will have no bearing on the outcome of your appeal.

Appeal hearings will normally be held within 40 school days of the deadline for submitting an appeal i.e during the late Spring and early Summer Terms. Families will be given 10 days' notice of an appeal hearing date and time. Appeals for heavily oversubscribed schools can last for up to two weeks. You will be notified of the decision no later than five school days after the last hearing unless there is good reason why the decision has been delayed.

² A looked after child is a child who is (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 as defined by section 22 (1) of the Children Act 1989 at the time of making the application for a school place

The decision of the Panel is binding on parents, the LA and schools. The Council, Councillors and even Members of Parliament are unable to change its decision. If you think that the appeal process has been conducted unfairly you can complain to the Local Government Ombudsman. However, the Ombudsman does not have the power to change the decision of the Panel.

All arrangements for allocation of school places and for appeals will be in line with the School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code published by the Department for Education.