ADMISSIONS POLICY

This document sets out the admission arrangements for Harris Academy Merton.

The Academy will comply with all relevant provisions of the statutory codes of practice (the School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code) as they apply at any given time to maintained schools and with the law on admissions as it applies to maintained schools. Reference in the codes to admission authorities shall be deemed to be references to the governing body of the Academy. In particular, the Academy will take part in forums set up by Merton Local Authority (LA) to discuss admissions and have regard to its advice and will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by Merton LA.

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE

The admission arrangements for the Academy for the academic year 2020/2021 and subject to any changes approved by the Secretary of State, for subsequent years are:

a) The Academy has an agreed admission number of 240 applicants in Year 7 and a total student number of 1470 (including the sixth form). The Academy will accordingly admit at least 210 applicants in Year 11 & 240 in Years 7-10 if sufficient applications are received.

b) The Academy may set a higher admission number as its Published Admission Number (PAN) for any specific year. The Academy is not required to consult on any proposed increase to the PAN; however it will notify the Merton LA of the increase and specify the changes on the Academy website.

Administration of applications

Applications for students transferring from primary school to the Academy will be made in accordance with the LA’s co-ordinated admission arrangements and will be made on the Common Application Form (CAF) provided and administered by the applicant’s home LA. 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 Merton LA:

- October CAF to be completed and returned to the applicant's home LA to administer
- November Merton LA will notify the Academy of every application for their school
- December Applicants are invited to sit a non-verbal reasoning test
- January The Academy will provide Merton LA with an electronic list of applicants in criteria order
- March Offer letters posted or uploaded by Merton LA. The deadline for acceptance of a place is two weeks from the offer date

Parent/carers of applicants are invited to submit an Additional Information Form if they believe the
applicant may require additional time in the non-verbal reasoning test.

The Academy will consider all applications for places. Where fewer than 240 applications are received, the Academy will offer places to all those who have applied.

**Procedures where the Academy is oversubscribed**

For entry during the normal admissions round into Year 7 the allocation of places will take place within a framework of Fair Banding. All applicants are placed in one of nine ability bands depending on the score they achieve in a non-verbal reasoning test. The number of places available to be offered from each band will produce an intake that represents the full range of ability of applicants to the Academy.

Where the Academy is oversubscribed, after allocation of applicants with an Education, Health and Care Plan, applicants who live within a four miles straight line distance from the Academy are ranked within each band in the following order:

- **Looked after children and previously looked after children.**
  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 (see definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). A previously looked after child is a child who was adopted or subject to a residence order, or special guardianship order, immediately following having been looked after.

- **Applicants for whom it is essential that they be admitted to the Academy because of significant medical needs evidenced by written medical evidence.** The Academy will make a judgment based on the evidence provided as to whether it is the only school able to meet the applicant’s needs.

- **Applicants who have an older sibling in Years 7 to 12 attending the Academy at the time of application.** A sibling is defined as a child who lives as a brother or sister in the same house including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings and stepbrothers or sisters.

- **All other applicants i.e. applicants who do not meet the above criteria.**

Within each of these criteria applicants will be ranked according to the home to Academy distance (defined below).

If at the end of this process there are unallocated places in any band, these will be filled by unallocated applicants, alternating between the band above and below, using the same allocation criteria set out above.

If the number of applications from within four miles is exhausted then applicants outside of the four mile zone will be considered using the same criteria as above.

Distances will be measured in a straight line from the applicant’s home address, with those living closer to the Academy receiving the higher priority. All distances will be measured by the computerised Geographical Information System maintained by the Merton LA school admissions team. It should be noted that the computerised system measures from a start point plotted within the centre of the property at which the applicant lives to the Academy pedestrian gate and calculates this measurement.

The applicant’s home address excludes any business, relative’s or childminder’s address and must be their normal place of residence. If there is a genuine equal share custody arrangement between the two parents, the address that will be used will normally be the address of the parent who is claiming Child Benefit for the child, however all available evidence will be considered.

Where distance is the determining factor, and more than one applicant has the same home to school
distance for a single place, lots will be drawn to determine the rank order.

If an applicant does not sit the test, they will be considered after those who have and will be considered on a straight line distance basis only. Priority will be given to looked after children and previously looked after children. Given the level of oversubscription that the Academy has, it is unlikely that the Academy will be in a position to offer places to children who do not sit the test.

Notwithstanding these arrangements, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to admit a named applicant to the Academy on application from an LA. Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult the Academy.

**Arrangements for in-year (casual) admissions**

Applications for in-year admission to Years 7-11 at the Academy will be administered in line with Merton LA’s protocol on the processing of these type of applications. If more applications are received than there are places available, the over subscription criteria stated above shall apply however, applicants will not be required to participate in the Fair Banding process. Parents/carers will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel, established by the governing body, if they are unsuccessful with an admission application to the Academy.

Notwithstanding the requirement of the previous paragraph, the Academy may refuse admission to particular applicants in cases where there are fewer students in a particular year group than the published admission number. Such refusals will occur where special circumstances apply as specified in the School Admissions Code, e.g. the applicant concerned has previously been permanently excluded from two or more schools or where the Academy has a particularly high concentration of students with challenging behaviour and to admit the applicant would prejudice the efficient education of other students, in accordance with the area’s Fair Access Protocol. However, the Secretary of State may direct the Academy to admit such applicants and such a direction will be binding.

**Operation of waiting lists**

The Academy will operate a waiting list where for any year the Academy receives more applications than there are places available. This will be maintained by the Academy and it will be open to any parent/carer to ask for the applicant’s name to be placed on the waiting list, following an unsuccessful application.

For primary to secondary applicants, the waiting list will remain open until the end of the Autumn term of the year of admission to Year 7. Following this, for in-year applications the applicant will remain on the waiting list until they reach compulsory school leaving age. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to applicants on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria above, however in-year applicants will not be required to participate in the Fair Banding process.

Applicants with an Education, Health and Care Plan naming the Academy, those placed through Merton LA’s Fair Access protocol, and looked-after children/previously looked-after children will take precedence over other applicants on the waiting list.

**Arrangements for appeals**

Parent/carers will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel, established by the governing body, if they are unsuccessful with an admission application to the Academy. The appeal panel will be independent of the Academy. The arrangements for appeals will be in line with the School Admissions Appeals Code published by the Department for Education, as it applies to Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools. The determination of the appeal panel will be made in accordance with the School Admission Appeals Code and is binding on all parties. Queries from parent/carers regarding appeal arrangements should be directed to the Admissions Officer at the Academy.
Arrangements for admission to sixth form provision

The Academy operates a sixth form for 300 students. Admissions are co-ordinated within a scheme published by the Harris Federation for those Academies within its sixth form Federation (details available from the Harris Federation website and known as Harris Sixth Form). This includes a common application form which allows applicants to rank choices of course and enables the Federation to offer a place on an available course at an Academy site.

The Federation will publish specific criteria each year in relation to minimum entrance requirements for Year 12, as well as academic entry requirements for each course available, based upon GCSE results or other measures of attainment. These criteria will be the same for internal and external applicants and will be published in the prospectus and on each participating Academy’s website.

Applicants already on the Academy roll are entitled to transfer to Year 12 if they meet the published standards of entry and there is one of their chosen courses available at their current Academy. If there is not they will be considered alongside and equally with external applicants and will be offered a suitable course at another Federation Academy if they meet the admission criteria.

There are 190 places available in Year 12 at Harris Academy Merton - the Year 12 capacity. The admission number for external applicants for Year 12 is 30. This is the number of places which will be offered on an annual basis to eligible applicants. If fewer than 160 of the Academy’s own Year 11 students transfer into Year 12, additional external applicants will be admitted until Year 12 meets its capacity of 190.

If Year 12 is oversubscribed then, after the admission of applicants with an Education, Health and Care Plan, the following criteria will be applied to determine which applicant should be given priority for the places available on chosen courses, providing they have met the sixth form entry and course requirements:

1) Looked after children and previously looked after children

2) The distance of the applicant’s home from the Academy with those applicants living closest being given priority

Applicants who do not attain the entry requirement for their preferred course will be offered alternative choices of courses if available. There will be a right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel for applicants if they are unsuccessful with an admission application to the Academy.

Annual Procedures for Determining Admission Arrangements

Harris Academy Merton shall consult on any changes to its proposed admission arrangements as set out in the School Admissions Code, published by the Department for Education.

Policy Last Reviewed November 2018