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Admissions Policy

This document sets out the admission arrangements for St Mark's Academy. The policy links to Annex 1 of the Supplemental Funding Agreement between the school and the Secretary of State. Any changes to the arrangements set out in this document must be approved in advance by the Secretary of State.

The School 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. Reference in the codes to admission authorities shall be deemed to be references to the Local Governing Body acting on behalf of CST Schools Trust. St Mark's Academy will take part in the Admissions Forum set up by Merton Local Authority and have regard to its advice; and will participate in the co-ordinated admission arrangements operated by Merton Local Authority.

Notwithstanding these arrangements, the Secretary of State may direct St Mark's Academy to admit a named student to St Mark's on application from a local authority. Before doing so the Secretary of State will consult the school.

Admission arrangements approved by the Secretary of State

The admission arrangements for St Mark's Academy for the year 2020-2021 and, subject to any changes approved by the Secretary of State, for subsequent years, are:

- a) St Mark's Academy has an agreed admission number of 120 pupils. St Mark's Academy School will accordingly admit 120 pupils in the relevant age group each year if sufficient applications are received.
- b) St Mark's 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, St Mark's Academy will inform Merton Local Authority and reference this change on the school's website. 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.

Process of application

Applications for places at the school will be made in accordance with Merton Local Authority's coordinated admission arrangements and parents will complete their home Local Authority Common Application Form. St Mark's 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 Local Authority.

Please note that, to be considered for admission during the **normal admission round** (October 2018 to February 2019) and during the **late admission period** (February 2018 to end of August 2018), all applicants must complete and submit their **home local authority's common application form**, including St Mark's Academy as one of their preferences. The school will also provide information to the local authority for inclusion in the composite prospectus, as required.

Where an applicant applies from **September 2019 onwards** for a place for admission between September 2019 and end of Summer term 2020, **this will be an 'in-year' admission and parents must apply to the school directly for a place.** Parents can obtain information and an application from the LA.

- a) September – St Mark's Church of England Academy will publish in its prospectus information about the arrangements for admission, including oversubscription criteria, for the following September (e.g. in September 2018 for admission in September 2019). This will include details of open evenings and other opportunities for prospective pupils and their parents to visit the school.
- b) September/October – St Mark's Church of England Academy will provide opportunities for parents to visit the school.
- c) November – Parents complete the Common Application Form of their home Local Authority and return it to their home Local Authority to administer.
- d) January – Merton Local Authority receives the admission data for St Mark's Church of England Academy and forwards this admission data to St Mark's Church of England Academy (regardless of preference).
- e) February – St Mark's Academy sends a list of its 120 offers of places to Merton Local Authority.
- f) March – Merton Local Authority returns names of the students being offered a higher preference elsewhere. St Mark's Academy submits replacement offers.
- g) April – One offer of an Upper school place is made to parents by Merton Local Authority.

Consideration of applications

St Mark's Academy will consider all applications for places. Where fewer than 60 applications are received, the school will offer places to all those who have applied.

Procedures where St Mark's Academy is oversubscribed

If the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) where the school is named in the EHCP, priority for admission will be given to those children who meet the criteria set out below, in order:

- A 'looked-after child' or a child who was previously looked after but immediately after being looked-after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order. 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 the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).
- Children for whom a particular school is appropriate on exceptional medical grounds. Such applications will be considered under this criterion only if they are supported by an attached medical statement from a doctor. This must demonstrate that there is a very specific connection between the child's medical need and the school requested. The Local Governors of St Mark's Academy will make the decision related to such applications.

- Children with a sibling attending the school at the time of application. ‘Sibling’ is defined in these arrangements as half, full, step, adoptive or foster brother or sister living predominantly in the same home as the child. In the event of there being more siblings than there are remaining places in an ability band, it is possible that a sibling under these circumstances would not be offered a place. Where siblings exceed the remaining places in an ability band, places will be allocated by the drawing of lots.
- Other children by distance from the school, with priority for admission given to children who live nearest to the school as measured by computer software based on Ordnance Survey and postal address data. The software measures using public roads and footpaths adopted and recorded by Merton Council’s Highways Team. When using roads for measurement purposes the software measures along the middle of the road. It starts from a point in the footprint of the property provided as the child’s address and continues by the shortest available route to the nearest of the school gates which is used by the pupils to enter the school grounds. Blocks of flats are treated as one address. In blocks of flats, priority will normally be given to the lowest flat number. Addresses in private roads will measure from the footprint of the property, along the middle of the private road leading to the public road/footpath as adopted and recorded by Merton Highways Team. Not used are routes using common land, open spaces, public parks, subways or footpaths not adopted by the Highways team
- Where a child lives with both separated parents, the home that the child lives in for the most time per week will be counted. Where the child lives in both homes for equal amounts of time, the home nearest to the school will be counted as the child’s home.
- Priority may be given to children eligible for pupil premium or service premium following a local consultation. St Mark’s Academy will consider the wider impact of making such a change, in order to ensure that places remain available for local children.
- A proportion of places will be prioritised for nursery children who are eligible for early years pupil premium, pupil premium or service premium,

Tie-break

In the case of a tie-break being necessary, children of multiple births (twins, triplets etc) will be given priority and then if a further tie-break is necessary, random allocation will be used. A person independent of the school will be asked to supervise any random allocation.

Operation of waiting lists

Subject to any provisions regarding waiting lists in Merton’s Local Authority’s coordinated admission scheme, the school will operate a waiting list. Where in any year St Mark’s Academy receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will operate. This will be maintained by St Mark’s 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.

Children’s position on the waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria set out above. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. The waiting list for admissions will be ranked again every time a child is added, in line with the published oversubscription criteria.

Arrangements for appeals panels

Parents will have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel if they are dissatisfied with an admission decision of St Mark’s Academy. The arrangements for Appeals will be in line with the Code of Practice on School Admission Appeals published by the Department for Education. 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 school will prepare guidance for parents about how the appeals process will work and provide a named contact who can answer any enquiries they may have about the process.

Arrangements for admitting students to other year groups, including to replace any students who have left St Mark's Academy

Subject to any provisions in the Merton Local Authority's coordinated admission arrangements relating to applications submitted for years other than the normal year of entry, the school must consider all such applications and if the year group applied for has a place available, admit the child. If more applications are received than there are places available, our oversubscription criteria will apply. Parents of children whose application is turned down are entitled to appeal.

St Mark's Academy will consider parental requests for summer born children to be admitted to Reception rather Y1 at the age of 5. Parents must apply for a Reception place in the child's normal age group at the usual time (i.e. whilst at nursery, before January 2019). At the same time, parents must make their application for admission out of the normal age group (for the following year) at the same time.

Parents will be informed of the school's decision before April 16. This will enable the parent to withdraw their application for the normal age group if their application for deferment is agreed or decide to accept the offer of the normal age range if they are refused. Alternatively, they could refuse this offer and make an in-year application for admission to Y1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday.

On receiving a parental request for a summer born pupil, the school must consider the local context, and question if their pupil numbers can accommodate the pupil in nursery until they start Reception, and will the child miss out Reception and go straight to Y1

Government advice on summer-born children:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389448/Summer_born_admissions_advice_Dec_2014.pdf