BRADGATE
Education Partnership

Ambitious
Collaborative
Ethical

POLICY:

Admissions Policy 2028

Mercenfeld Primary School

Admissions arrangements from Autumn 2028

Approved: TBC (Trust Board Education Committee)
Review Date:
Responsible Officer: Director of Education

Stronger Together

BRADGATE
Education Partnership



MISSION:

Through strong collaboration between our schools, Bradgate Education Partnership is committed to providing an ambitious and inclusive education for all.

We want our children and young people to realise their full potential academically, socially and personally. We celebrate the distinctive ethos of each individual school. We ensure that all who are part of our Trust have a deep sense of belonging and a supportive opportunity to grow.

Stronger Together

VALUES:

Ambitious
We aim high and are aspirational for all.

Collaborative
We work closely together to encourage, support, challenge and share.

Ethical
We treat everyone fairly, within a culture of kindness and respect.

VISION:

PUPILS
All our pupils are equipped with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to thrive in life and make a positive difference.

SCHOOLS
All our schools provide a safe and happy space where pupils study an ambitious curriculum which unlocks their personal potential so that they achieve exceptional outcomes.

WORKFORCE
All staff have positive impact in their roles whilst feeling supported and valued both personally and professionally.

COMMUNITY
All our schools embrace the local area they serve within a deeply embedded culture of community partnership.

WIDER WORLD
All our pupils and staff understand, respect and embrace the diversity of the wider world in which they live.

SUSTAINABILITY
Across our partnership, everything we do is aligned to meet the needs of the present without compromising a sustainable future.

Tel: 0116 478 3426

bepschools.org

1. The purpose of this Policy

Bradgate Education Partnership ("the Trust") is the admission authority for schools in the multi-academy trust. This policy sets out the admission arrangements for the purposes of allocating school places to Mercenfeld Primary School.

Bradgate Education Partnership contracts with **Leicestershire County Council Admissions** to co-ordinate both First Time and Mid-Year Admissions, using a common application form.

Contacts:

Bradgate Education Partnership Trust Offices Wreake Valley Academy Parkstone Road Syston LE71LY Tel: 0116 478 3426 Email: info@bepschools.org	Mercenfeld Primary School Oakfield Ave, Markfield, Leics., LE67 9WG Tel: 01530 243151 Email: office@mercenfeld.bepschools.org	Leicestershire County Council School Admissions Team https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education- and-children/schools-colleges-and-academies/school-admissions

2. Planned Admission Number

Mercenfeld Primary School has an Admission Number (AN) of 30 into reception year.

3. Education Health and Care Plan

The law requires that children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that names a school in their plan are allocated the place and are **not** subject to conditions set out within this policy.

4. Application for First Time Admissions

Admissions Timeline:

- 15 January - Closing date for applications to the Local Authority (LA)
- 28 February - Publication of appeals timetable on LA website
- 16 April - (or next working day) National offer day for First Time Admission and Infant-Junior Transfers
- April to August - Appeals process and outcomes
- August - New intake starts at school

For first time admission, applications for a school place must be made by 15th January during the academic year (between 1st September and 31st August) in which the child turns four, even if the child will not be of compulsory school age in September when they start school.

Parents can elect for children not to attend school at the start of the autumn term – for further information see section 6 regarding deferring a child's start of school or see section 7 regarding delaying admission to the following academic year.

Parents living in Leicestershire must apply to Leicestershire County Council ("the LA") for a school place. The best way to apply is by applying online through the Council's website https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/schoolscolleges-and- academies/school-admissions however paper copies of the application form can be requested from the Customer Service Centre by calling 0116 305 6684.

Parents that do not live in Leicestershire but are seeking a school place at a school within the area can do so by applying through their home local authority.

Parents living within Leicester City must apply to
https://www.leicester.gov.uk/schools-and- learning/school-and-colleges/schooladmissions/

Applications to home local authorities will be forwarded to the LA for processing on behalf of the Trust, in accordance with the co-ordinated admissions scheme. Please see the LA's website for a copy of the co-ordinated scheme at:

https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools-collegesand- academies/school-admissions/school-policies)

All applications received by 15th January will be considered first and in accordance with the approved priority criteria. Where there are more applications than places, these will be ordered in accordance with the approved priority criteria (see section 9). Applications received after the closing date but before 31st January will be considered on-time but must be supported by documentary evidence that the situation was beyond your control. All applications received after the closing date will be considered

after those that have been received on-time. In exceptional circumstances, late applications may be considered as on time where the parent is able to evidence the reason for lateness was beyond their control e.g., children in care, forced re-location, new school opening etc. However, late applicant families who are already resident within the catchment area and have moved to another address within catchment will not be considered exceptional circumstances and will not be offered a place at the school in those circumstances, where the admission of another child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources.

For those parents that live in Leicestershire, the LA will confirm decisions for applications on the national offer date 16th April (or on the next available working day if 16th April falls on a weekend/bank holiday).

For those parents that do not live in Leicestershire, the LA will confirm decisions to the relevant home local authority who will in turn inform parents.

Places will be allocated up to the pupil Admission Number (AN) for Mercenfeld Primary School, which is 30 pupils in the normal year of entry (reception year). The Trust will not refuse admission where there are fewer applications than places. If there are more applications than places priority will be given to children whose parents applied on time, in the order given at section 9.

The decision will either be to offer a place at a school or refuse the place where the admission of another child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources, or because admission would breach the infant class size limit, see section 5. A refusal letter will also explain to the parent their right to appeal.

5. Infant Class Size & Exceptions

Infant Classes (Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2) must not exceed 30 children* per teacher. Applications into reception year up to the pupil admission number (30) will always be accepted. Beyond this, applications for year groups which would cause infant class size of 30 to be exceeded will normally be refused. This includes where admission would cause the infant class size limit to be breached in the future.

*The Trust abides by the School Admissions Code which permits more than 30 children in an infant class in specific circumstances, as detailed below:

The School Admissions Code September 2021 states:

"Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances. These children will remain an 'excepted pupil' for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit. The excepted children are:

a) children admitted outside the normal admissions round with Education, Health and Care Plans specifying the school;

b) looked after children and previously looked after children admitted outside the normal admissions round;

c) children admitted after initial allocation of places, because of a procedural error made by the admission authority or local authority in the original application process;

d) children admitted after an independent appeals panel upholds an appeal;

e) children who move into the area outside the normal admissions round for whom there is no other available school within reasonable distance;

f) children of UK service personnel admitted outside the normal admissions round;

g) children whose twin or sibling from a multiple birth is admitted otherwise than as an excepted pupil;

h) children with special educational needs who are normally taught in a special educational needs unit attached to the school, or registered at a special school, who attend some infant classes within the mainstream school."

6. Admission of children below compulsory school age and deferred entry

Admissions to reception at Mercenfeld Primary is the September immediately following a child's fourth birthday (i.e. children who have turned 4 before 1st September).

Upon notification of a school place being offered, a child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday, but they are not required to start school until the start of the term after the term in which they reach compulsory school age.

The date the child is admitted to the school can be deferred until later in the school year or the child can attend part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age in the year the original application was made.

A child's school place may be deferred but only up until the beginning of the summer term.

Where a child has failed to attend school by the start of the summer term in the school year for which the original application was made, parents will have to submit a new application unless there are exceptional circumstances which have prevented the child from attending school. Where there are no exceptional circumstances, any application will be treated as an in-year application.

Exceptional circumstances will include a child who has been unable to attend school because of medical reasons e.g., hospitalisation or operation recovery that has taken up to two school terms.

7. Admission of children outside their normal age group at Bradgate Education Partnership Schools

At the point of first-time admission parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

Parents of a summer born child, that is those children born between 1st April and 31st August, may choose not to send their child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group, for example into the Reception year group rather than Year 1 (this is considered as a delayed entry for the purposes of this policy).

To request delayed entry parents should make an application for their child's admission to their normal age group at the usual time, in accordance with this policy. Within that application parents should also submit a request to the school for admission outside of the normal age group. The school will share the request with the Trust for information. Further information about the process will then be provided to parents.

Decisions will be made by a panel of the Trust (as the admissions authority) based on the circumstances of each case and considering the best interests of the child concerned, including the headteacher's view. This will take into account:

- parents' views;
- information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- where relevant their medical history;
- any views of medical and other professionals;
- whether they have previously been educated outside of their normal age group;
- whether they may have fallen in to a lower age group if the child was not born prematurely; and
- the views of the Headteacher of the school concerned.

Where the Trust agrees to the parent's request for their child to be admitted to a year out of their normal age group, it will be necessary for the parent(s) to apply again for a place in Reception at the appropriate time a year later as part of the co-ordinated first time admission process. If that application is successful, the child will be admitted into Reception. However, parents must be aware that any such consent will not guarantee them a place at a particular school.

Parents' statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not their preferred age group.

8. In-Year (mid-term) Transfers (all year groups) whether in-catchment or not

Bradgate Education Partnership schools participate in full with the LA's co-ordinated policy for mid-term (in-year) applications, which can be found here https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools-colleges-and-academies/school-admissions/school-policies.

Mid-term transfer requests (in-catchment or otherwise) will be co-ordinated through the LA's School Admissions Service on behalf of the Trust. The best way to apply is through the Council's mid-term application form (Common Application Form) available online (before applying parents are encouraged to arrange to visit the school).

The Council will aim to notify the parents of the outcome of their application in writing within 10 school days and must notify in writing within 15 school days.

The decision will be to either offer the place or refuse the place where the admission of another child would prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources. A refusal letter will also explain to the parent their right to appeal, and how they should do this.

The LA (on behalf of the Trust) will maintain an over-subscription waiting list throughout the autumn term for the first-time admissions year (FTA) and throughout the relevant year for in-year admissions (mid-term transfers), ranked in the same order as the published over-subscription criteria and in line with the LA's waiting list rules, and not by the date of application.

9. Priority Criteria for Entry Autumn 2028 Admissions and Mid-term Applications during 2027/2028 Academic Year

Priority will be given to children whose parents applied on time and will be ranked in accordance with the priority criteria set out below. Where there are more applications than places or there is a tie, the next relevant criteria will be used to determine which application should be offered the place, if they still have identical ranking then lots will be drawn (see section 10 below):

1st	Children who are looked after and those children who were previously looked after children. (See note i.)
2nd	Pupils who live in the catchment area. (See note ii.)
3rd	Pupils who have a sibling (see note iii) already attending Mercenfeld Primary School and who will still be attending the school at the point of entry.

4th	Pupils who have a serious medical condition or exceptional social or domestic needs that make it essential they attend the school requested. (Professional documentation confirming the situation must be submitted with the application.) (See note iv.)
5th	Pupils living nearest to the school measured in a straight-line distance (home to school front gate). (See note v.)

Notes:

i. 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) at the time of making an application to a school. Previously looked after children are children who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (became subject to child arrangements orders in 2014 or special guardianship orders) 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.

- A child is regarded as having been in state care outside of England if they were in the care of or were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation, or any other provider of care whose sole or main purpose is to benefit society.
- Children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 and children who were adopted under section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. 24
- Child arrangements orders are defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians)

ii. For the purpose of processing a school application a single home address must be used. The child's place of residence is taken to be the parental home at which they normally reside. Where parents claim equal or dual residency, they must prioritise one address over the other, or risk the application not being processed (see section 19 for further information). For children of UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces) and crown servants a unit postal address or quartering area address that has been formally declared by an official letter will be used as the home address prior to arrival into the UK (see section 23 for further information).

iii. The term sibling relates to:

- brothers and/or sisters who share the same parent(s)
- a half-brother, half-sister or legally adopted child living at the same address
- a child looked after by a local authority placed in a foster family with other school age children
- a stepchild or children who are not related but live as a family unit, where parents both live at the same address as the child.

iv. If criterion 4 is used, when making an application parents should send evidence from an independent professional person who knows about the child and supports the application to the school. It must clearly show why the school is the most suitable and any difficulties if alternate schools were offered. An independent professional person is, for example, a health professional, social worker, teacher/early years professional or support worker or such other appropriate person. The evidence must be supplied and must be submitted with the application for a school place.

The following lists the areas that are considered exceptional:-

(a) Children with a serious medical condition - showing that the needs of the child can only be met at the specific school and why other schools would not be able to meet this need, or a child has an exceptional illness or disability (for example, limited mobility) which means that, the child can only reasonably attend one school.

(b) Children subject to Child Protection Plans and Child in Need Plans and the child can only reasonably attend one school.

(c) Parents suffering domestic violence (This is dependent on documentary evidence by a lead professional for example a health professional, social worker, teacher/early years professional or support worker or such other appropriate person)

The school will make the decision during the processing period in consideration with relevant professional documentation.

v. For criterion 5 above, measurement of distance of up to three decimal places will be in a straight line from the centre point of the home property to the school's main designated front gate, using a computerised mapping system. Where there is equal distance then lots will be drawn.

10. Tiebreaker

If two or more applications have identical ranking following applying all the above criteria in priority order, lots will be drawn. The drawing of lots will be undertaken

by an independent person, not an employee of the trust, trustee or member of the school Local Advisory Board.

11. Children Who Move Out of or Into the Catchment Area including Late and or Mid-Term Applications

A child who is already attending the school and whose place of residence changes to an out- of-catchment address is entitled to continue attending the school.

Where a family have made an application they must notify the LA (acting for the Trust) of any change in their address as soon as possible after the move.

Where a family has applied for or been offered a place at the school and move home during the course of the admissions process (i.e. after the closing date for first time admissions or transfers but before they start) they must notify the LA immediately.

During the normal round the latest date a proof of change of address can be accepted for the purposes of an application that has already been submitted is the third Friday in March for first time admissions. Home moves will not be accepted without proof. Where proof is received after the third Friday in March, the application will be considered as late.

12. Withdrawal of places

Once a place has been offered at a school the LA (on behalf of the Trust) may withdraw that place prior to starting school where it has been established that:

the place was offered in error;

or

it is established that the place was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application; or where the parent has not responded within a reasonable time.

13. Mid-term Applications

The school participates in the LA's mid-term co-ordinated scheme and applications for this are best made on-line via www.leicestershire.gov.uk/admissions (Select Changing school during term time)

Applications made outside of the normal round of admissions (i.e. seeking to move school part way through an academic year) will be offered a place where one exists.

14. Appeals

The Trust subscribes to the LA's Appeals Service. All parents will have a right of appeal if an application for a school place is refused and this will be detailed in the refusal letter.
Parents have a right to appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. The decision of an Independent Appeal Panel is binding on parents and the admitting authority.

To appeal please go to the Leicestershire County Council website - https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools-colleges-andacademies/school-admissions/appeal-a-school-place-and-check-waiting-lists-online

15. Second Applications (Further Appeals)

Ordinarily parents may only make one application for any particular school per academic year. In exceptional circumstances, and at its sole discretion, the Trust may allow a further application to be made where there has been a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent, the child or the school.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of what may be considered to be exceptional:

- change of address i.e. where the change of address is into the catchment of the school;
- new significant and material evidence has come to light in your personal circumstances;
- a significant change in medical circumstances (apart from medical attention for distress or anxiety as a result of unsuccessful applications / appeals);
- there has been a significant and or material change in the circumstances of the school i.e. significant extensions / new build, an increase in AN, increase in the number of teaching staff.

In such instances parents must provide the Trust with written details of the significant and material change together with any evidence of that change. Where the significant and material change is accepted a second application will be permitted and must be made in the usual way and will be processed in the normal manner and, where necessary, in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.

16. Errors

Where the LA, working on behalf of the Trust, has made an error in the processing of an application for a school place, and it is established that had the error **not** occurred

it would have resulted in the applicant being offered a school place, a place will be offered at the school.

Applicants are responsible for the accuracy of all and any information which they submit. Neither the Trust nor the LA takes any responsibility for incorrect information submitted (i.e. an incorrect date of birth, failure to mention sibling(s), failure to provide supporting evidence etc.) or the impact that such information may have on the determination of their application. Where applicants become aware of such errors, they should notify the LA as soon as possible.

17. Exceeding the Admission Number (AN)

In certain exceptional circumstances the Trust/School may determine that an admission above PAN can be made. In line with 1.5 of the admissions code this will not constitute an increase in PAN

For the purpose of this section, exceptional circumstances may include but are not limited to:

- Where a child moves into the catchment area outside the normal admissions round **and** there is no other school place available within a reasonable distance **and** they apply within 90 days of the move.

Pupils may also be admitted above PAN where there is:

- an independent appeal outcome in the parent's favour;
- the admission of children who is subject to Leicestershire's Fair Access Protocol;

18. Determining Home Address/Parental Proof of Residence

In determining an application for a school place, the Trust or the LA may request evidence of an address or of a move into a catchment area or arriving in the UK.

Such evidence may include but not be limited to:

- Opening Council Tax Bill;
- Signed and dated copy tenancy agreement;
- Copy of a letter of completion of house purchase from a solicitor.

In addition to the above you may also be asked for:

- Copy of child benefit letter;
- Copy of current driving licence;
- Copy of registration at GP practice or hospital consultant.

Where a family has moved in with relatives or friends (including new to UK):

- A declaration from Parents and householder / homeowner / relative / friend confirming the applicant family now reside at the address;
- A copy of most current council Tax bill from occupier.

Where the LA or the Trust does not consider it is has been provided with satisfactory proof of address, the application will not be processed until proof has been obtained.

19. Clarification of home address where the family's current address is deemed temporary or multiple addresses

For the purposes of this policy the following will not normally be accepted as the home address except in the circumstances stated:

(a) Purchase of a second property by a family, while the first property is retained; or

(b) Rented accommodation while a previous property is retained. The family must provide satisfactory evidence to the LA and the Trust that the rented accommodation is their primary residence through proof of residence, and by demonstrating that the old property is not being occupied by them. In that instance, the LA must be provided proof of zero/vacant occupancy (i.e. discounted council tax, see section 17.6); or

(c) Temporary living arrangements whether living with relatives or not i.e. whilst re-furbishing, building or decorating the permanent home address. The home address will be taken as the one where the family can provide proof of residence; or

Where because of reasons beyond parental control a house move has been imposed on the family or children (i.e. fleeing domestic violence (refuge address), safe home (witness protection), home repossessions, losing your home through an 'act of god' i.e. home destroyed, etc.), subject to supporting documentation; or where the parent has been hospitalised and the children have been placed with a relative or carer, the temporary address will be accepted for the purposes of a school application on proof of hospitalisation i.e. a letter from a medical professional, and a declaration from the relative or carer of the arrangements.

Split Residence

Where a child lives for part of the week with one parent and for part of the week with the other parent, the address recognised by the school for the purposes of an application for a school place is the one where the child lives; that is the address where

the child permanently spends at least three 'school' nights (that is, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday) and will be taken to be the place of residence.

Where the weekly residence arrangement varies, and a child stays with both parents, on average, for the same amount of time during the school week over a four-week period, and one parent lives in another school catchment, the parents will be required to choose one address for the purposes completing a school application. If those with parental responsibility are unable to agree on the preferences, it may be necessary for parents to obtain further legal advice. Leicestershire County Council on behalf of the school will continue to process an application unless legal documentation is provided that states an application cannot be processed or a pending court hearing. In cases where multiple applications are received for the same child, the LA on behalf of the school will establish where the child lives for the majority of the time. Where parents cannot agree a single address, parents will be required to seek a Court Order to determine which address is to be used. Where any claimed residence arrangement is found to be false, and the child is yet to start at the allocated school, the place will be withdrawn as it will be considered obtaining the school place on fraudulent and / or misleading grounds. In such circumstances the application will be considered afresh and determined at that time based on the correct information.

20. Oversubscription Lists

The LA (on behalf of the Trust and its schools) maintains an oversubscription (waiting) list for first time admissions:

The oversubscription (waiting) list is ranked in the same order as the published oversubscription criteria and not by date of application. The list will be held after 16th April (National Offer Date) until the 31st December of that year. Any applications that are refused before 31st December will also be automatically placed on the oversubscription (waiting) lists.

Applications received after 1st September will be determined as mid-term applications.

The LA (on behalf of the Trust) does not hold waiting lists past 31st December in relation to any mid-term applications. If, at any point while on the oversubscription (waiting) list, the family's circumstances change and the LA has been made aware, the application will be re- assessed and the lists will be re-ranked in accordance with the priority criteria. Where a family has failed to notify the LA of such a change and is subsequently offered a place, that place may be withdrawn.

21. Circumstances in which an application might be refused – children with challenging behaviour and twice Excluded Pupils

Where a child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools, there is no obligation on the Trust to comply with parental preference for a period of two years from the last exclusion. This does not apply where exclusion was before the child was of compulsory school age, for children who have been re-instated following a permanent exclusion or for children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

In addition to this, applications for vulnerable children who have been unable to secure a school place outside of the normal admissions round may be referred for consideration under the LA's Fair Access Protocol. Further details about this can be found on the LA's website.

https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2022/3/9/fair-access-protocol.pdf

Parents should be aware that where children are considered under the protocol, the protocol has no obligation to comply with school preference rights (although it will be considered) in seeking to secure a school place. However, there is nothing to prevent a parent from applying for a different school at that time – any such application will be considered in accordance with the usual process.

Where an admissions authority does not wish to admit a child with challenging behaviour outside the normal admissions round, even though places are available, it must refer the case to the LA for action under the Fair Access Protocol.

For those children of primary school age, the Primary Fair Access Panel will consider the most appropriate school and will aim to facilitate a re-integration.

Parents are not precluded from applying for a school place even whilst the FAP is ongoing.

22. Children from Overseas

Applications from non-UK nationals will be processed in accordance with this policy.

If the Trust or the LA have any concerns as to a child's leave to remain in the UK and/or entitlement to state education, such concerns shall be referred to the Home Office.

23. Children of UK Services Personnel and other Crown Servants

For children of UK service personnel with a confirmed posting to the area or crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area, the Council will use the address at which the child will live when applying the oversubscription criteria, as

long as the parent provides some evidence of their intended address. A unit or quartering address will be used as the child's home address where a parent requests this and evidence, such an official letter declaring the relocation, is received.

For families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants returning from overseas, the admission authority will:

a) allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area (as long as one is available), provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date. This must be an official government letter issued by a government department e.g. FCDO, UKVi, DIT. We will not refuse to process an application or refuse a place solely because the family do not yet have an intended address, or do not yet live in the area.
b) use the address at which the child will live when applying their oversubscription criteria, as long as the parents provide some evidence of their intended address. For example, we will use a Unit or quartering address as the child's home address where a parent requests this.

Appendix 1: Catchment Map

