

Determined Admission Arrangements for 2020/21: Consultation Report

1 Background

Cathedral Schools Trust (CST) is the admission authority for all schools within the Trust. Admission arrangements are reviewed and determined (agreed) on an annual basis by the governing body and trustees. There are no guarantees that admissions criteria set in previous years will remain the same in future years for parents wishing to apply for their child(ren).

Whenever an admission authority for a state school wishes to make any changes to its admission arrangements it is required to conduct a statutory consultation. Changes must be consulted approximately eighteen months before the admission date of the students affected, so changes for admissions in September 2020 must be consulted on in winter 2018/19 following the timetable set out in the School Admissions Code (SAC) [DfE School Admissions Code](#) It stipulates:

- Who must be consulted, such as parents, other admission authorities, other schools
- When the consultation must happen - for a minimum of 6 weeks ending no later than 31st January 2019
- When the arrangements must be determined (agreed) following the consultation - by 28th February 2019
- When the arrangements must be published - by 15th March 2019
- Objections to the schools adjudicator - by 15th May 2019

The consultation process took place for changes proposed to the admission arrangements for Bristol Cathedral Choir School and its 6th Form, Cathedral Primary School, Victoria Park Primary School and Trinity Academy. The consultation ran for a six week period from 12th November 2018 to 7th January 2019.

Following feedback from parents and the local authority, the admission authority was made aware that a copy of the draft BCCS admission arrangements had not been attached to the email of 12th November 2018 notifying BCCS parents about the consultation. The admission authority reacted quickly and, on 17th December 2018 made the decision to extend the consultation for Bristol Cathedral Choir School and its 6th Form until 31st January 2019. Reference was also made to changes to the order of priority for the over subscription criteria. Parents, other admission authorities and other schools were informed of the extension as a requirement of the SAC.

2 The proposed changes



2.1 Bristol Cathedral Choir School

To increase the published admission number (PAN) for entry to year 7 to 150. The need for secondary school places in Bristol is becoming increasingly critical and by 2022 there is a projected shortage of 684 places across the city. BCCS has had an intake of 150 students for year 7 for 2017 and 2018 entry and therefore the PAN needs to be adjusted accordingly.

To name Cathedral Primary School (CPS) as a feeder school for BCCS. As CPS is legally a separate school from BCCS it is necessary to name CPS as a feeder school in the admission arrangements for BCCS to achieve this.

To remove year 12 as a qualifying sibling. Whilst we recognise that parents will want their children to attend the same school, it is accepted that this is more significant for younger children and that it is reasonable to apply this criterion for Year 7 to Year 11 at secondary school.

To reduce the postcodes of the catchment area or area of prime responsibility to BS1 to BS16. This is to better support the needs of Bristol children seeking school places in Bristol schools. Random allocation will be used as a tie-break to decide the remainder of the places from any of the Bristol postcode areas from BS1 to BS16. In the event of any places still available these will be allocated by random allocation to those applicants living outside of the BS1 to BS16 postcode areas.

The order of priority for over subscription criteria has also changed.

A number of other changes have been made to the wording of the policy to improve clarity and ensure it is compliant with applicable legislation.

2.2 Bristol Cathedral Choir School 6th Form

To remove Year 12 as a qualifying sibling. Whilst we recognise that parents will want their children to attend the same school, it is accepted that this is more significant for younger children and that it is reasonable to apply this criterion for Year 7 to Year 11 at secondary school.

To reduce the postcodes of the catchment area or area of prime responsibility to BS1 to BS16. This is to better support the needs of Bristol children seeking school places in Bristol schools. Random allocation will be used as a tie-break to decide the remainder of the places from any of the Bristol postcode areas from BS1 to BS16. In the event of any places still available these will be allocated by random allocation to those applicants living outside of the BS1 to BS16 postcode areas.

The order of priority for over subscription criteria has also changed.

A number of other changes have been made to the wording of the policy to improve clarity and ensure it is compliant with applicable legislation.



2.3 Cathedral Primary School

The main change to the admission arrangements for 2020/21 is the proposal to amend the sibling criterion for a CPS applicant. An applicant who has an older sibling on roll at BCCS will no longer qualify for a place under this criterion. However, they will qualify for a place if the sibling is on roll at CPS.

The other change is to reduce the postcodes of the catchment area or area of prime responsibility to BS1 to BS16. This is to better support the needs of Bristol children seeking school places in Bristol schools, random allocation will be used as a tie-break to decide the remainder of the places from any of the Bristol postcode areas from BS1 to BS16. In the event of any places still available these will be allocated by random allocation to those applicants living outside of the BS1 to BS16 postcode areas.

A number of other changes have been made to the wording of the policy to improve clarity and ensure it is compliant with applicable legislation.



2.4 Victoria Park Primary School

The change to the admission arrangements for 2020/21 is the proposal to include a staff criterion.

A number of other changes have been made to the wording of the policy to improve clarity and ensure it is compliant with applicable legislation.



2.5 Trinity Academy

The change to the admission arrangements for 2020/21 is the proposal to amend the wording for the sibling criterion.

The wording of the policy is also amended to clarify Trinity Academy will be part of the coordinated admissions scheme with Bristol City Council and all applications are made on the common application form via the home local authority and to ensure it is compliant with applicable legislation.

3. Consultation responses and proposed admission arrangements amendments

The consultations were sent to all parents of students for each school where relevant, published on the relevant school website and/or newsletter of each school, published on the trust website, circulated to local schools situated in the same local authority, and other schools situated in neighbouring local authorities, sent to the local authority in which the schools are situated and to neighbouring local

authorities and any other relevant body such as the Diocese and local libraries. (A mailing list of circa 500 as per the requirements of the SAC). The relevant parties above were also notified of the extension to the BCCS consultation.



3.1 Bristol Cathedral Choir School Year 7 - 11

Overall there were 92 responses received in the consultation period.

- 29 responses from individuals who identified themselves as BCCS parents
- 50 responses from individuals who identified themselves as CPS parents
- 8 responses from individuals who didn't identify themselves as a parent of either BCCS or CPS
- 1 response from another Multi - Academy Trust
- 1 response from a member of CST staff/parent
- 1 response from a member of BCCS teaching staff
- 1 response from a Cathedralian
- 1 response from a member of the public
- 1 response from the Diocese of Bristol

Summary

To increase the published admission number (PAN) to 150

There was 1 response from a parent in favour of increasing the published admission number to 150.

To name Cathedral Primary School as a Feeder school

The vast majority of comments were in response to the proposal to make Cathedral Primary School a feeder school for Bristol Cathedral Choir School.

54 were in favour of the proposal and commented on;

- Continued integration with BCCS; obvious and natural progression
- Share the same site and some facilities
- Enhances relationships already formed with BCCS
- Sense of pride being part of the trust community
- Shared values and ethos
- The philosophy on which CPS was founded and vision to be a feeder school
- Parents who joined CPS in 2013 put their faith in the Executive Principal and Headteacher when there wasn't even a school to attend
- Disruptive to children, emotionally and educationally not to become the feeder school for BCCS
- Parents can apply from all over Bristol to attend - admissions not based on distance via postcode
- Still enough places available at BCCS for pupils from other primary schools

23 were against the proposal and commented on;

- Limits the diversity of bringing children together from different communities/other primary schools
- Changes the dynamic of the school
- Loses the sense of community/part of the BCCS family
- Random allocation alone is fairest way
- Being allocated a place at BCCS should not be a golden ticket that enables all children in one family to get a place
- Seen as elitist and way of improving results
- Creation of a 'closed shop'
- Limited opportunity for other students to get a place by random allocation
- Concerns that youngest sibling may not get a place as fewer places available
- Suggestion to prioritise existing families with siblings applying to school/impose the change on a rolling basis.
- Suggestion we remove sibling rule completely so that all children have an equal opportunity of obtaining a place
- Allocation of a place should not be based on the luck or skill of an older sibling securing a place
- Unfair to prioritise CPS over other primary schools within the Trust
- Queries about the legality of naming CPS as a feeder school
- Removes the option of BCCS as secondary school
- Unaware CPS existed.

To change the criterion order, to place feeder and staff above siblings

Linked to the above response, some individuals were concerned about and commented on the following:

- Unacceptable to put sibling behind feeder school and staff children
- Concerned how it affects youngest child in the family who may not get a place
- Concerns about how parents would manage commuting to 2 different secondary schools
- Concerns about future admission of a younger child/expectation they would get a place
- Parents upset no explanation was given as to why feeder criterion was placed above sibling criterion
- Siblings of probationer choristers or music specialists may not get a place.

To remove year 12 as a qualifying sibling

There were 6 responses in favour and 6 against. There were 6 responses that commented and/or wanted clarification as to how it would affect their children and commented on:

- Concerns around removing the year 12 sibling link from parents wishing to apply to year 7 - the youngest child who is due to start year 7 when an older sibling moves into year 12 - clarity that to qualify under the sibling criterion, at the time of the application, when they are in year 6 the older sibling would be in year 11 (3 responses)
- Impose the change on a rolling basis/maintain the year 12/year 7 connection for those with children who joined prior to 2020.
- Loses the 'whole school' feel of BCCS

To reduce the postcodes to BS1 to BS16

There were 5 responses in favour, but several individuals wanted clarity as to how it affected their children:

- Concerns around restricting opportunities for those who live outside of the city
- Clarity as to whether prospective chorister can apply if they live outside BS1 to BS16
- Clarity as to whether siblings will be admitted above others if their family address is outside BS1 to BS16
- Concerns as to whether an existing student on roll will qualify for the 6th Form if they live outside BS1 to BS16
- Serve local residents as a priority
- Irrelevant because there won't be any places left to allocate
- Restrict postcodes to all the oversubscription criteria

There were 4 responses against, citing the following:

- Limits opportunities for other students to attend
- Puts pressure on schools outside the city to admit more students
- Children in North Somerset will not be able to attend because they are not BS1 to BS16, despite the school serving the area for 100+ years
- 1 respondent had mixed views - agreed that postcodes should be reduced but should still include BS30, BS32, BS34 and BS41 as people generally consider these to be Bristol.

Staff criterion

- There was 1 response from another MAT as to how we cover staff employed by the Trust rather than an individual school
- There was 1 response from a member of BCCS teaching staff; CPS staff will have the opportunity to get places for their children at BCCS because CPS is the feeder school. BCCS staff don't have the advantage when applying to the primary school
- There were 2 responses from parents who did not agree that staff should be above siblings - teachers should not be given special treatment

General Queries

- Clarity that a probationer chorister can still audition if they live outside of BS1 to BS16
- Clarity on whether the probationer chorister places mean that BCCS has a faith designation.
- BCCS should give priority to applicants entitled to pupil premium
- There was also a response from the Diocese of Bristol regarding the consultation process and the change to the order of criterion which we responded to separately.

3.1.1 Bristol Cathedral Choir School: in conclusion

Governors and Trustees have discussed, at length over the past 18 months, prior to starting the consultation the impact of naming CPS as a feeder school. They are fully aware that the proposed change was likely to generate a range of views from different stakeholders. Given the balance of responses, Cathedral Schools Trust has decided to proceed with the feeder criterion as set out in the arrangements that it consulted on. This is in accordance with BCCS's stated public intention since Cathedral Primary School was first proposed, to name it as a feeder school. Consultation responses broadly support this proposal, citing aspects such as continuity with curriculum and pastoral support, shared values and ethos, shared site and facilities. It has to be noted the feeder school criterion was

also included in the BCCS admission arrangements 2014/15, above the sibling criterion, with the clause that it would effect entry for students applying to year 7 for 2020 onwards. However, following the decision of the School's Adjudicator in March 2015, we had to remove the criterion because it was a future admission. Their report stated *'If the school wishes to indicate that it intends to name Cathedral Primary School as a feeder school for admissions in 2020 then it will need to consult on including the school as a feeder school in its arrangements for admissions in that year and, subject to consultation, determine its arrangements accordingly.'* It should also be noted that the cohort that will be eligible to transfer from CPS to BCCS year 7 for 2020 and 2021 is 30 pupils and will be 60 pupils thereafter.

Given the high level of interest, CST will continue to review the arrangements annually and may consult again in Autumn 2019 for the 2021/22 year of entry. Therefore, CST has determined the admission arrangements as per the consultation version with the following amendments;

- For clarity, an explanation in the admission arrangements that an applicant's postcode (i.e. home address) is not taken into consideration when considering applications under the LAC/PLAC, probationer chorister, music specialism, feeder, staff and sibling criteria. Postcode is only used to determine the remainder of places in category 7 - by random allocation.

3.2 Bristol Cathedral Choir School 6th Form Post 16

To remove Year 12 as a qualifying sibling

- 1 response in favour and also commented that we should remove sibling criterion altogether
- Clarification that it didn't affect a student applying for 2019 (1 response)

To reduce the postcodes to BS1 to BS16

- Concerns as to whether an existing student on roll will qualify for the 6th Form if they live outside BS1 to BS16 (1 response)

Other responses to Post 16

- One individual wanted clarity around the 6th Form capacity of 300 and the combined PAN for 2019 and 2020 entry
- One individual wanted clarity on the wording of "BCCS will admit any students with an EHCP, naming the school, providing they meet our minimum academic entry requirements for courses they wish to study". We are placing conditions on a student with an EHCP which is in breach of the code, therefore we should remove 2nd part of the sentence
- One individual suggested post 16 should be open to all and admission should be based on a personal statement

3.2.1 Bristol Cathedral Choir School 6th Form Post 16: in conclusion

CST has determined the admission arrangements as per the consultation version with the following amendments;

- Clarity on the wording of how EHCP students are considered and replace the sentence with "BCCS will admit any students with an EHCP, naming the school."
- Clarity on the wording around the 6th Form capacity which is amended; The admission number for year 12 is 100. This is the number of places which will be offered on an annual basis to

eligible **external** applicants. i.e students who are not already on roll at BCCS. If fewer pupils intend to transfer from year 11, the school will admit over the admission number.



3.3 Cathedral Primary School

3 responses were received in the consultation period.

There was 1 response against the change to the sibling criterion who commented that siblings of children in BCCS should still get priority but have a two tier system - priority for CPS siblings, then BCCS, as it is easier for families to drop off and collect from same site.

There were 2 responses in favour to reduce the postcode for random allocation to BS1 to BS16 who commented that it supports local Bristol children and enables students to walk/cycle/bus to school to contribute to the green ethos of the school.

CST has determined the admission arrangements as per the consultation version.



3.4 Victoria Park Primary School

1 response was received. CST has determined the admission arrangements as per the consultation version.



3.5 Trinity Academy

1 response was received.

CST has determined the admission arrangements as per the consultation version with the following amendment;

- To make it clearer for parents, an amendment to clarify over-subscription criteria point 5a '25% of the remaining places will first be randomly allocated to children living within the inner priority area', rather than the previous wording 'up to 25%'.