

Consultation Report: Determined Admission Arrangements for 2023/24

1 Background

Cathedral Schools Trust (CST) is the admission authority for all schools within the Trust. The admission authority constitutes an admission committee of trustees and governors for each school (referred to as the 'committee' hereafter). Admission arrangements are reviewed and determined (agreed) on an annual basis. The committee has the freedom to determine what their admission arrangements will be for each intake. There are no guarantees that admission criteria set in previous years will remain the same in future years for parents wishing to apply and hoping to secure a place for their child(ren).

Whenever a committee for a state school or academy 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 2023 must be consulted on in winter 2021/22 following the timetable set out in the School Admissions Code 2021 (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 2022.
- When the arrangements must be determined (agreed) following the consultation - by 28th February 2022.
- When the arrangements must be published - by 15th March 2022.
- Objections to the schools adjudicator - by 15th May 2022.

Cathedral Schools Trust (CST) consulted on the admission arrangements for **the following** schools only within the Trust for the academic year 2023/24;

- **Bristol Cathedral Choir School (BCCS) 11-16 provision**
- **Bristol Cathedral Choir School (BCCS) Post 16 provision**
- **Cathedral Primary School (CPS)**
- **Victoria Park Primary School (VPPS)**

The consultation process ran from **22nd November 2021 to 12 noon on 11th January 2022**.

Anyone wishing to comment or offer feedback on the proposed admission arrangements was able to complete the online form, ticking the relevant box to show which school their comments referred to or to contact CST via email; consultation@cathedralschoolstrust.org or post.

2 The proposed changes for the above schools

The proposal put forward was to remove the staff criterion from the priority list for admissions for these schools; this was the only change. The criterion has been in place for a number of years and the committee felt that it was an appropriate time to seek views from all stakeholders to determine whether it is still appropriate for these schools. The current wording of the staff criterion in the admissions arrangements is below:

Current Staff Criterion

Next, priority will be given to children who are sons / daughters of employees of [Victoria Park Primary School/BCCS/CPS]. This will include all teaching and non-teaching staff who have;

- a. been employed permanently at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, or;*
- b. where the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.*

3 Consultation responses and proposed admission arrangements amendments

The consultation was sent to all parents of students for each school where relevant, published on the relevant school website and/or newsletter of each school and published on the Trust website. It was also circulated to local schools situated in the same local authority with a request to forward to their parents, and other schools situated in neighbouring local authorities with a request to forward to their parents. It was 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. This includes a mailing list of circa 500 recipients as per the requirements of the SAC.

The consultation was also displayed on the Citizen Space page of the Bristol City Council website: (<https://bristol.citizenspace.com/people/admissions-for-own-aa-schools-2023-2024/>)

The committee was provided with all responses received during the consultation process and has considered all comments made by consultees.

3.1 Responses

Overall there were **97** responses to the consultation.

Respondent Type:

Staff members - 46.6%

Parents/carers - 37.6%

Others e.g. governor/member of public - 15.8%

Breakdown by school as follows:

Bristol Cathedral Choir School (BCCS) - There were **56** responses to the consultation relating to BCCS; 30 from members of staff, 17 from parents/carers, 6 from members of the public and 3 from governors.

Cathedral Primary School (CPS) - There were **17** responses to the consultation relating to CPS; 8 from members of staff, 7 from parents/carers and 2 from governors.

Victoria Park Primary School (VPPS) - There were **11** responses to the consultation relating to VPPS; 5 from members of staff, 3 from parents/carers and 3 from governors.

All schools - There were a further **13** responses relating to all schools within the consultation; 3 from members of staff, 7 from parents/carers and 2 from members of the public.

Summary of responses

- Support for staff and their wellbeing/work life balance e.g. issues around childcare if children are taught elsewhere.
- The number of places taken up is relatively low; therefore removing the places will have a minimal impact on the overall places available for allocation.
- Staff within the state education sector get limited support and this is one way that schools can both recruit and retain high quality staff.
- It helps create a shared sense of community and buy-in from all staff members.
- Overall 93% of respondents did not support the removal of the staff criterion.

Other comments

The feeder school criterion for BCCS and sibling priority was raised by a couple of respondents but this aspect of the admission arrangements was subject to a previous consultation in winter 2018/19 for the September 2020 intake and is therefore not considered in this consultation.

3.1.1 All schools: in conclusion

Governors and Trustees have discussed at length the proposed changes to admission arrangements and were aware that it was likely to generate a range of views from different stakeholders.

We received a high number of responses from staff members, parents and governors and were grateful for all the views put forward through the consultation process. It was clear from responses that the option for staff to be able to send their children to the school where they work was important for a range of reasons including making the logistical challenges of childcare more manageable and supporting their wellbeing. It was also clear that the staff criterion supports retention and helps to build the shared sense of community within each school.

The committee is committed to supporting staff and listened to the concerns raised in responses to the consultation. As a result the committee has approved a decision to keep the staff criterion in the admission arrangements for these schools. The wording of the staff criterion has been varied to clarify the definition of an employee and to make it compliant with the new School Admissions Code 2021.

Staff Criterion - Revised wording following consultation on Admission Arrangements 2023/24

Next, priority will be given to children of staff who are employed by Cathedral Schools Trust (CST) where their main place of work is [•Name of School] (School). This will include all teaching and non-teaching staff who;

- a. have been employed at the School for at least two consecutive years at the time at which the application for admission is made; or*
- b. were recruited to fill a vacant post at the School for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage.*

Notes;

- A School will be the staff member's main place of work if they are based there for at least 50% of their contracted hours each week during term time.*
- Children of staff include their natural or adopted children, children placed with the staff member on a long term foster placement, their step-children (i.e. their spouse's children) and the children of their partner who live with them. In all cases, the child must live at the same permanent address as the staff member.*

- *A staff member is an employee of CST with a 'continuity of employment' contract who is full time, part time, teaching, leadership or support staff, and who will still be employed by CST in the September the child is admitted.*

The order of the oversubscription criteria within the admission arrangements has not changed. There have been some further changes to the wording of the arrangements to improve clarity and ensure they are compliant with applicable legislation.