

# Sola Fide Multi Academy Trust

## Policy for Admissions 2020/21

### 1. Statutory Framework

Sola Fide Multi Academy Trust (SFMAT) is a multi-academy trust of three schools and the Directors of SFMAT are its admission authority.

The Directors apply the regulations on admissions fairly and equally to all those who wish to attend one of its schools. Schools will comply with the provisions within the Schools Admissions Code and the Schools Appeal code available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academy-admissions>

### Sola Fide Schools

The schools within the SFMAT are: St Anne's C of E Primary School (Church Controlled), St Chad's C of E Primary School (Church Controlled) and St John's C of E Primary School (Church Aided). All the schools are inclusive schools that welcome children from all backgrounds and abilities. The only restriction placed on entry is number. If the number of applications exceeds the number of places available, the following criteria will be applied. It is our wish to allow parents the right to have the place at the school of their choice. However, this is not always possible due to excess demand on the places available.

St Anne's has a planned admission number of 30

St Chad's has a planned admission number of 45

St John's has a planned admission number of 40

### Infant Class Size Legislation

Infant classes (those where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6 or 7 during the school year) must not contain more than 30 pupils with a single school teacher (as defined in Section 4 of the SSFA 1998). 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.

Subsequent guidance has made it clear that local authorities are expected to ensure that older children who have experienced the benefit of restricted class numbers should continue to benefit from a similar limit on the size of junior classes.

### Application Procedures

Oldham residents will apply for a reception school place using the Oldham on-line facility. The application period will run from 01 September 2019 to 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

Applications received after the appropriate closing date will be regarded as late unless, in the judgement of SFMAT, there are significant and exceptional reasons for the lateness. Proof of special circumstances will be required.

Late applications are not considered until all on-time applicants have been allocated places.

A child's name will be automatically placed on the waiting list (for the individual school first applied to) where they have been refused a place in the school's normal year of entry.

### **In-Year Admissions applications**

Oldham residents, who wish to apply for a place in the first year at school after the first school day in September, or to any other age group at any time, will apply on the local authority Common Transfer Application Form.

### **Oversubscription criteria**

The duty to comply with parental preferences requires that all applicants will be offered a place providing there are enough places in the school for everyone who applies.

All schools are required by section 324 of the Education Act 1996 to admit to the school a child with a statement of special educational need or Education Healthcare Plan that names the school. This is not an oversubscription criterion and all children with statements naming a school will be admitted before other children are offered a place.

If the number of applications exceeds the admission number it will be necessary to determine which pupils can be offered a place by applying the following oversubscription criteria in priority order. (Please note that The Published Admission number for St Chad's C of E Primary was 40 up until September 2017, when it became 45.)

#### Oversubscription Criteria for Church Controlled and Maintained schools within SFMAT

##### **Criterion 1.**

Children in care or children who have previously been looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order will be given the highest priority for admission.

##### **Criterion 2**

Those children who are considered to have exceptional medical or social reasons as to why they should attend a particular school. Parents will be required to submit evidence to support their application under this criterion (see note (a) below).

##### **Criterion 3**

Those children who already have a sibling at the school to which they are applying within SFMAT and who will still be attending when their brother/sister starts in Reception. (see note (b) below).

##### **Criterion 4**

Geographical proximity to school, with those families living nearest to the school having higher priority. Distance is measured in a straight line between the home postcode (see note (c) below) and the school's postcode, measured electronically by GIS software within the admission database using Post Office data and Ordnance Survey data.

## Oversubscription criteria for Church Aided Schools within SFMAT

### **Criterion 1**

Children in care or children who have previously been looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order will be given the highest priority for admission.

### **Criterion 2**

Those children who are considered to have exceptional medical or social reasons as to why they should attend a particular school. Parents will be required to submit evidence to support their application under this criterion. (see note (a) below)

### **Criterion 3**

Children who attend the church to whom the school is affiliated

### **Criterion 4**

Those children who already have a sibling at the school to which they are applying within SFMAT and who will be attending when their brother/sister starts in Reception. (see note (b) below)

### **Criterion 5**

Children who attend another place of worship

### **Criterion 6**

Geographical proximity to the school, with those families living nearest to the school having higher priority. Distance is measured in a straight line between the home postcode (see note (c) below) and the school's postcode, measured electronically by GIS software within the admission database using Post Office data and Ordnance Survey data.

### **Notes for all schools within SFMAT**

(a) Exceptional reasons for priority over other applicants - Decisions must be consistent and based on objective evidence, which must be provided in writing by an appropriate professional e.g. a doctor or a social worker.

(b) Siblings –SFMAT accepts that in some family units (1 or 2 parents/carers and children), the children may not be natural brothers and/or sisters. Other children from the same family unit can be considered as a sibling link under this criterion provided that proof is available to demonstrate that the children are permanently resident at the same address and part of the same family unit.

(c) Tie breaker - Should it be necessary to distinguish between applicants with equal priority within any of the above criteria, the distance is measured as a straight line from the child's home address to the school property measured between the two central data points of the home postcode and school post code. Measurements are calculated using Geographical information System mapping software based on Ordnance Survey and Postcode data.

### **Permanent Address**

The only address SFMAT can consider is the address of the adult with whom the child is permanently resident. Where a child stays with another parent for part of the week, further enquiries may be made in order to determine where the child is permanently resident. Proof of residence will be required.

Any allegations received by the admission authority of people providing false accommodation for school places shall be fully investigated and, if found to be true, allocated places may be withdrawn.

If a childminder, grandparents or another member of the family cares for the child on a daily basis at another address, SFMAT cannot consider this address for the purpose of its admission process to school.

### **Intention To Move House**

An intention to change address cannot be considered by SFMAT until such a move has actually taken place and proof is available to substantiate the change of address. Proof of change of address will be accepted up until the latest reasonable date prior to the final allocation of school place usually in April.

### **Twins or Triplets**

In cases where twins, triplets, or other multiple birth siblings are split when allocations take place, they will be allocated a place over the Published Admission Number and will remain excepted pupils for the time they are in an infant class or until the class numbers fall back to the current infant class size limit.

### **Flats**

In the event of two or more children living equal distant from the school, e.g. blocks of flats, the place will be decided by drawing lots, the first name drawn will be offered the place.

### **Start date**

There is a legal requirement that all children are in full time education by the beginning of the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. Once a place has been allocated parents/carers can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. For children born between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> August this cannot be beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made. Deferred entry should be arranged directly with the Head of school for which the application has been made.

### **Waiting Lists**

If a place cannot be offered at the time of application, the child's name will be placed on a waiting list at the parent's request. Those on the waiting list and late applicants will be treated equally and placed on the same waiting list. Waiting lists will be held in order of the published admission criteria.

### **Appeals**

All parents have the right to appeal against the refusal of a school place by submitting an appeal to the Independent Appeal Panel constituted and operated in accordance with the School Admissions Appeal code. This is co-ordinated and managed by the local authority. If parents wish to appeal they can do so by completing a School Admission Appeal Form and return it to Oldham Council. A decision by an Admission Appeal Panel is binding on the school governors and parents.

## **Applications for a Nursery Place (where available)**

St John's C of E Aided Primary School currently has 26 part-time places available. It is important to note that a place in the nursery has no relevance to attendance at St John's Primary School or any other school within SFMAT. A separate application for the primary school will have to be made in accordance with SFMAT admissions arrangement. No appeal will be allowed against the refusal of a place in the nursery.

Children are admitted to nursery at the beginning of the autumn term prior to their fourth birthday.

Application packs/forms are available from the school and parents are encouraged to discuss their requirements with the Early Years Foundation Teacher. If the nursery is oversubscribed, priority will be given to children with Education and Health Care Plans where the school is named. Remaining places will be offered in accordance with the oversubscription criteria that applies to the school.

The nursery will maintain a waiting list which will be used to fill vacancies during the academic year. It will be compiled in accordance with the Admissions Code so that children will be ranked in line with the school's oversubscription criteria.